Tanong ng Bayan / A18

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Jalosjos suffers stroke

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Yudhoyono declared new Indon president

■ Across / A15

Tanauan cops sacked over unsolved killings

■ Metro / A17

Janitor holds 7 pupils hostage

Speculators fail to crack peso, Asian currencies

SINGAPORE—The Philippine peso could have earned the dubious distinction of becoming the first Asian victim of a speculative attack in the 21st century.

But after three battles with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), speculators have made negligible gains—and may have even lost money.

SPECULATORS/ A6

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Ex-agri chief doesn't impress Ombudsman

By Armand N. Nocum and Carlito Pablo

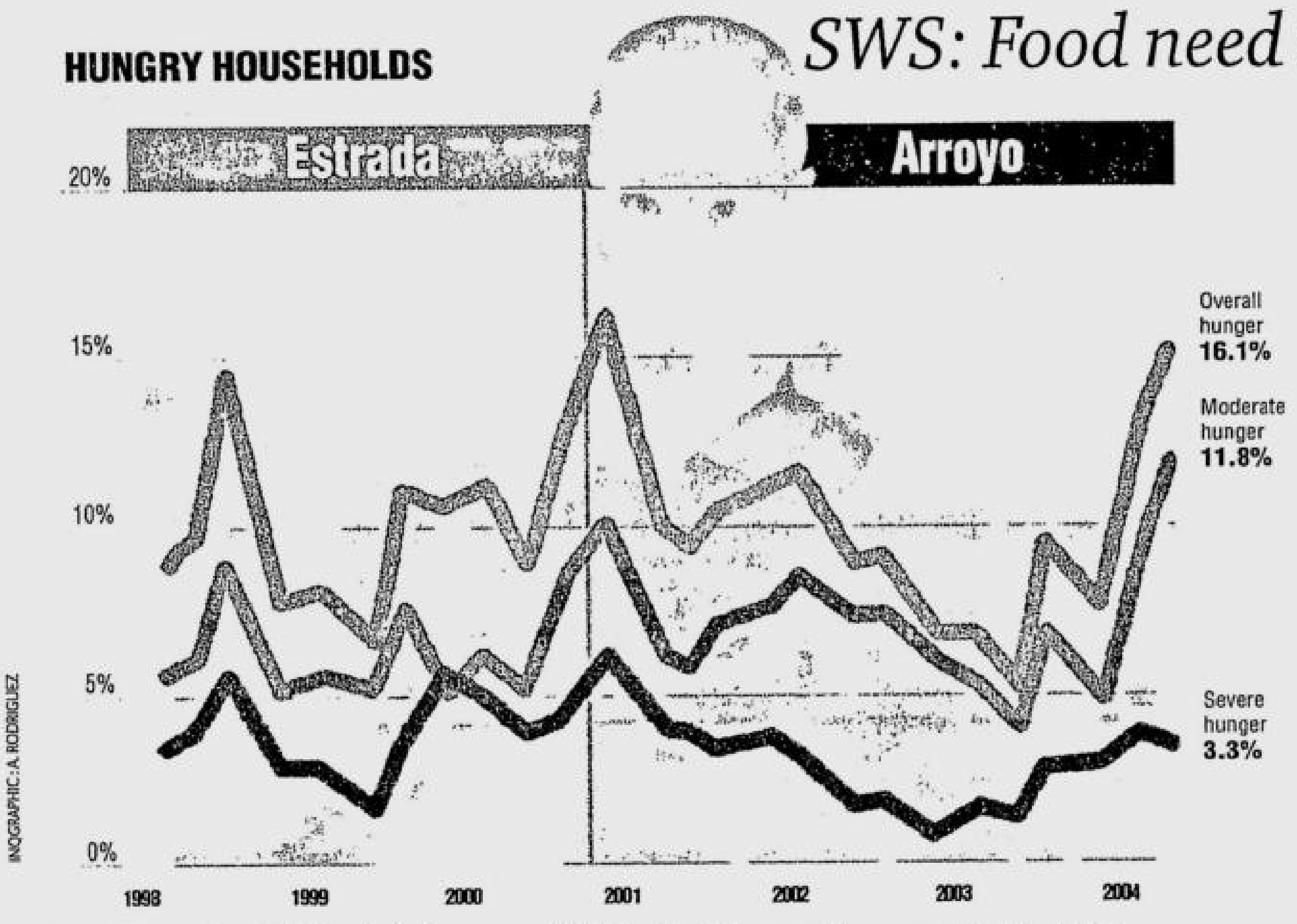
OH, REALLY?

Ranking Ombudsman and Commission on Audit officials want former Secretary Luis Lorenzo to

EX-AGRI/ A8

Hunger stalks 15% of Pinoy households

SWS: Food need acute in South



A GROWING number of Filipinos in the "strong republic" of President Macapagal-Arroyo are going hungry. The incidence of hunger rose to 15.1 percent nationwide in August, up 2.1 percentage points from June.

HUNGER rose to record levels in Metro Manila and Mindanao just two months into the second term of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Nationwide, one out of every seven (15.1 percent) household heads polled by Social Weather Stations (SWS) in August said his family had nothing to eat at least once in the last three months, triple the number the previous year.

The rising incidence of hunger came as the prices of food and other basic necessities rose sharply. The cost of utilities like electricity and water as well as transportation and liquefied petroleum gas had also gone up.

The SWS survey found that the incidence of hunger in Mindanao rose to 23 percent, the highest in the country and about four times the 5.3 percent incidence of hunger on the island in September 2003.

In Metro Manila, household heads reporting that their families went without food at least once over the past quarter increased to 15.7 percent, or more than double the 7.3 percent almost a year ago.

The rest of Luzon recorded an 11.3 percent incidence, up from 4.7 percent.

In the Visayas, the incidence of hunger rose to 13.3 percent from 4.3 percent in September last year.

The incidence of hunger nationwide is the

HUNGER/ A6

Separation pay of GOCC worker may reach P1.5M

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

EACH employee of losing government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) to be abolished will receive a maximum separation incentive of P1.5 million.

Their counterparts in regular departments or agencies whose units face abolition will get a maximum of a half-month salary per year of service on top of their regular retirement pay.

These were among the provisions in Executive Order No. 366, the Government Rationalization Plan, which President Macapagal-Arroyo signed yesterday to set into motion the reorganization of all agencies under the executive branch.

Ms Arroyo said the rationalization plan was necessary to address the budget deficit and improve the delivery of government services.

The EO was issued as Malacañang warned 15 money-losing GOCCs and government financial institutions (GFIs) to shape up or face abolition. They are under fire for contributing heavily to the budget deficit through their huge debts and for giving excessive salaries and perks to their top officials.

The 15 are the National Food Authority, Light Rail Transit Authority, Philippine National Oil Co., National Home Mortgage and Finance Corp. Philippine National Railways, Technology and Liveli-

SEPARATION/ A6

AFP orders suspension of general

FINALLY, a big fish in the military.

The Armed Forces has ordered the immediate suspension of a two-star general after the Ombudsman found that he had assets disproportionate to his legitimate income, a military statement said yesterday.

It identified the officer as Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia, former AFP comptroller and currently chief of AFP Plans and Programs.

AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya issued the directive upon receiving an order from the Ombudsman to place Garcia under preventive suspension for six months without pay on charges "of dishonesty, gross misconduct and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service," the announcement said.

Efforts to reach Garcia through his cell phone were fruitless. Calls to his phone were answered by a recording.

Garcia, of PMA Class '71, is believed to be the first member of the military's top brass to fail "lifestyle checks" ordered by President Macapagal-Arroyo. As a two-star general, his salary amounts to P36,015.

Agence France-Presse quoted Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, AFP chief of public information, as saying that Garcia's suspension was the first for a general "in contemporary times."

Ms Arroyo vowed tough action against any government official or employee who would enrich himself while in office.

"The Commander in Chief will not accept any whitewash or cover-up in this case of unexplained wealth," Press Secretary

AFP ORDERS/ A8

COPING WITH HARD TIMES

Guerrilla legend shares 'survival' skills

By Volt Contreras

TIMES must be so tough nowadays that a new campaign for backyard-based food sufficiency has tapped a legendary guerrilla fighter and former peasant rebel to share his "wartime" survival skills.

"Whenever there was a pause in our fight with the Japanese, we were planting or harvesting *kamote* (sweet potatoes) to survive," Luis Taruc, 91, said at yesterday's launch of Coconut Camote Kita at the Quezon Memorial Circle.

Taruc headed the Hukbalahap guerrillas during World War II and later turned his Central Luzon-based force into a leftist insurgency movement.

Residing in Quezon City for the last five years, he had a niece accompanying him with a ready wheelchair but he preferred to walk with a cane when he showed up for the Coco-Camo-Kita launch.

Organized by Fr. Robert "The Running Priest" Reyes, the Coco-Camo-Kita movement hopes to inspire reliance on homegrown crops as a way to cope with the hard times. *(See banner story.)*

During the war, Taruc recalled, fewer people went hungry in the provinces compared to Manila because villagers in remote rural areas not reached by the enemy cultivated crops.

"We were even able to sneak in rice and corn to Manila, where people were dying from starvation," he told the INQUIRER.

In provinces where Taruc's men operated—Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Pangasinan and Pampanga—the preferred products were those "that can easily be concealed or are unknown" to raiding Japanese soldiers. These included *kamote*, squash, yams (*ubi*) and taro (*gabi*).

His men engaged in what Taruc dubbed "our harvest struggle"—sharing their supply of fruits, grains and vegetables with other fighting

GUERRILLA/ A8

TARUC: Veteran of "harvest struggle" PDI PHOTO

Rio's last wish: Bibles for friends, relatives in wake

RIO Diaz-Cojuangco: If I never had cancer, I wouldn't have found this much love for others, or received just as much love from them. PDI PHOTO

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—In the end, actress and television host Rio Diaz got her wish. Her last conversations were with loved ones, and her last words were not of pain.

Her husband, Negros Occidental Rep. Carlos "Charlie" Cojuangco, was holding her hand when she passed away "in peace" in a California hospital at about 10:30 a.m. yesterday (Philippine time).

Charlie had kept close watch since Rio was brought to the United States in January for yet another round of treatments. She was diagnosed with colon cancer six years ago and given three months to live.

"It's amazing that she survived this long," said Gretchen Cojuangco, Rio's mother-in-law, when interviewed at the family's Hacienda Balbina in Pontevedra town.

Gretchen, wife of business tycoon Eduardo "Danding Cojuangco, was scheduling Masses

RIO'S LAST WISH/ A8

[illegible]

What is colon cancer?

Any malignant tumor in the colon or large intestine.

Colon cancer, rectal cancer and colorectal cancer are one and the same condition. It starts with a single cell that mutates and grows into a polyp. A polyp that is allowed to remain in the colon could grow into a cancerous tumor in three to seven years.

Many of those afflicted exhibit no symptoms until the cancer is in its advanced stage. This makes routine screening imperative.

In case of bleeding, rapid weight loss, change in bowel habits, or a vague but persistent pain, see a doctor at once. Cure is possible with early detection.

(SOURCE: HTTP://WWW.CANCERCARE.ORG)

▶ Gloria talks about sis
Entertainment/ A26

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming frequent over Eastern Luzon.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/10/05/04

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

CONGRESS INQUIRY

Probe of GSIS reinsurance trade set

By Cynthia D. Balana, Christine O. Avendaño, Nancy C. Carvajal and Norman Bordadora

REP. JESUS Crispin Remulla (NP, 3rd dist., Cavite) yesterday asked Congress to look into the reinsurance contracts of National Power Corp. (Napocor) which had cost the government billions of pesos in premiums.

Remulla filed a resolution calling for a congressional inquiry after Winston Garcia, the embattled president and general manager of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), revealed that a reinsurance racket involving Napocor was partly responsible for GSIS losses amounting to "hundreds of millions of pesos in reinsurance premiums."

"We must [find out] who were responsible for these losses," Remulla said.

Because of the losses, he said, Napocor was forced to obtain big foreign loans, adding to the financial burden of the country.

Syndicate blamed

Garcia had said that a syndicate of insurance companies was one of the groups behind the move to oust him from the GSIS.

According to him, the ouster move started after he directed the GSIS to cut down its reinsurance coverage for Napocor by 75 percent, thus leaving only 25 percent for parceling out to private insurance companies.

Because of his policy cutting the reinsurance coverage of Napocor, Garcia said he was able to save the government at least P500 million.

This was resented, however, by the private insurance companies which started pressuring him to farm out 90 percent of the reinsurance business, he said.

Graft list

In other developments, Remulla's brother, Rep. Gilbert Remulla (NP, 2nd dist., Cavite) yesterday said he would compel Garcia to provide Congress with the list of GSIS executives and employees who had pending graft and administrative cases.

Remulla, co-sponsor of House Resolution 276b which called for an investigation of the alleged anomalies in the GSIS, said there was a need to find out which GSIS executives had contributed to the agency's losses.

"I am certain the list will reveal a lot about graft and corruption in the GSIS," he said.

The Senate also wants to get into the act.

P11-M housing loan

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon Jr. yesterday said the Senate committee on urban planning, housing and resettlement which he chairs may soon investigate Garcia for the P11-million housing loan he took out at the GSIS in November last year.

The militant group Courage had accused Garcia of abusing his authority after the latter was able to get the loan in two days.

Should Biazon's committee push through with its investigation, it would be the second Senate committee to probe Garcia.

Over the weekend, Sen. Richard Gordon said his committee on government corporations and public enterprises would conduct an inquiry into the controversies hounding Garcia, who is under siege for alleged mismanagement of the state pension fund and abuse of power.

At a news conference at the Senate, Biazon said he had asked protesting government and GSIS employees who "ambushed" him on his way to the Senate to present their complaints involving the GSIS at the probe.

The senator met with the protesters who were picketing the GSIS office, which is near the Senate building.

MEMBERS of Courage, the federation of government workers' unions, and other militant groups stage protest near the GSIS building in Manila to demand the ouster of GSIS chief Winston Garcia.

JESS YUSON

Biggest rally yet

The workers together with militant organizations yesterday staged the biggest rally so far demanding Garcia's resignation.

The protesters vowed to continue their action until Garcia resigns. They put up several tents and portable toilets near the GSIS headquarters in Pasay City.

Kasamahang Manggagawa ng GSIS union president Albert Velasco told reporters they were prepared to stay until Malacañang acted on their demand.

"President Macapagal-Arroyo has to choose between the GSIS members or Winston Garcia," Velasco said

In a makeshift tent, leaders of different militant groups took turns lambasting Garcia. Those who were at the rally aside from Courage were Akbayan, the Confederation of Independent Unions in the Public Sector, Anakpawis, Access and a group of some 50 metro aides who came in their bright yellow and red uniforms.

But the biggest federation of government employees' groups yesterday called on government workers to accept the call of Garcia for a dialogue instead of taking their fight to the streets and the media.

Officials of the Philippine Government Employees Association (PGEA) said some 50 representatives of employees' groups from various government agencies were slated to dialogue with Garcia and other GSIS officials today.

Swapping charges

"With all the charges and countercharges being hurled by the warring camps, it is but proper for government employees to exercise due diligence before taking any adversarial action," said Gloria Almariego, PGEA deputy secretary general and president of the Organization of Non-Academic Personnel in UP.

John Doco, PGEA public relations officer and president of the East Avenue Medical Center Employees Association, said PGEA leaders composed of 50 presidents of employees' associations in major government agencies will troop to the GSIS tomorrow to dialogue with its officials.

"Any controversy in government or even a union against management for that matter should be settled at the proper venue in accordance with the time-honored conduct of a social dialogue," Doco said.

Cebu support

In Cebu City, about 70 GSIS employees spent their lunch hour staging a rally in support of Garcia.

Cecil Gasendo, GSIS-Cebu assistant manager, said the rally was participated in by the pension fund's officials as well as the rank-and-file and contractual employees.

"We are supporting him because we are all aware of what is really happening in GSIS," Gasendo said in Cebuano.

In Iloilo City, however, about 50 government employees picketed the GSIS office at noon yesterday.

"Why is (President Arroyo) afraid of Garcia? The government employees cannot wait any longer for his ouster," said Pedro Escosia Jr., vice chair of the Western Visayas chapter of Courage.

Black armbands

In Leyte, about 5,000 members of Courage wore black armbands and ribbons to demand Garcia's ouster.

"Our call was for all members to stage silent yet visible protests in whatever form according to their capabilities. However, we are planning a big rally in the coming days," said Ricky Palencia, Courage secretary general in Eastern Visayas.

But all these may be for naught after a report by the Commission on Audit showed the GSIS posted the biggest profit among government agencies last year.

The COA report confirmed that the GSIS was not in dire straits as claimed by some lawmakers and disgruntled government employees but had posted a P35.6-billion net income last year.

Top earner

The report was submitted to the Senate committee on government corporations and public enterprises chaired by Gordon last week.

It showed the GSIS topped the list of 71 government-owned and -controlled corporations in earnings.

It was followed by the Home Development Mutual Fund which made P5.2 billion, Philippine Health Insurance Corp., P4 billion; Land Bank of the Philippines, P2 billion; Development Bank of the Philippines, P1.9 billion, and Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, P1 billion. *With Michael Lim Ubac, Manila; Jhunnex Napallacan, Nestor P. Burgos Jr. and Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau*

GSIS, SSS, RSBS merger eyed

By TJ Burgonio

SEN. RALPH Recto is filing a bill that would merge the Government Service Insurance System, Social Security System, and the Retirement and Separate Benefits System.

"Why do you need government agencies doing the same thing? That's the No. 1 reason [why we are proposing a merger]," Recto, chair of the Senate committee on ways and means, told reporters after a press forum at the Manila Hotel.

Besides, Recto added, a merger would drastically cut the amount of taxpayers' contributions to several agencies each year, which come in the form of deductions from their salaries.

"There's so much taxes that people pay by way of contribution. A lot is being deducted from their salaries and goes to the SSS, GSIS, Philhealth. Depending on the salary of the government, these make up 24 percent [of their salary]," he said.

Contributions by individual taxpayers amount to P110 billion a year, which is larger than the taxes paid by corporations, according to the senator.

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KL shrugs off sultan's claim

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia shrugged off a threat on Monday by one of Southeast Asia's more obscure royal dynasties to resort to international law to wrest back part of Borneo Island from Malaysia.

Malaysia's deputy foreign minister said the State of Sabah, which is also claimed by the Philippine-based Sultanate of Sulu and North Borneo, was an integral part of Malaysia.

"Malaysia is always very clear: Sabah has always been an integral part of Malaysia and Sabahans are very much Malaysian," Joseph Salang Gandum told reporters.

On Sunday, the new Sultan of Sulu accused Malaysia of illegally occupying the North Borneo State, whose waters are rich in oil.

"I will fight for my family's rights in the World Court," Rodinood Julaspi Kiram II told hundreds of followers outside a mosque in Quezon City, where he was crowned the 29th sultan of the Sultanate of Sulu and North Borneo.

Many of Southeast Asia's islands were governed by Muslim princes before the arrival of European colonial powers. *Reuters*

Attack on 2 cops in Abra irks PNP

By C. Esguerra

TWO POLICE officers were hacked and beaten up while serving an arrest warrant in Abra, the province now under tight police watch due to the long-running violence caused by the presence of private armies.

Enraged by the attack on Chief Insp. Osmundo Salibo and SPO1 Denis Indunan, PNP chief Edgar Aglipay yesterday warned that he would not stop until the national police rids the province of armed groups working for local politicians.

"The campaign against loose firearms and private armies won't be stopped by incidents like this," he told reporters during a visit to the wounded officers at Chinese General Hospital.

NEWSBRIEFS

Customs draws list of 200 smugglers

OBEYING President Macapagal-Arroyo's directive, the Bureau of Customs yesterday said it has prepared its "order of battle" against smuggling. In his first news conference as customs chief, Commissioner George Jereos yesterday said the bureau has compiled a list of 200 people and firms suspected of massive indirect smuggling which he said has been costing the government billions of pesos in revenues. Jereos said the suspected smugglers were mostly consignees, importers and customs brokers who misdeclare or undervalue the goods that they bring into the country's major ports. Such products include sugar, dangerous drugs, vehicles, rice and "ukay-ukay." The commissioner said the list would be sent to Malacañang to update the President on the bureau's latest efforts in the war against smuggling. He declined to disclose the identities of the suspected smugglers. *Jerome Aning*

R-II Builders ask SC to junk Chavez suit

SAYING that the Smokey Mountain development project was legal, the companies of businessman Reghis Romero II yesterday asked the Supreme Court to dismiss the petition to void the project. They added that some of the government agencies that helped fund the P6.6 billion project even earned millions in developing the former dumpsite. In a 58-page comment filed on Oct. 1, R-II Builders and R-II Holdings asked the high court to dismiss the petition of former Solicitor General Francisco Chavez against the project for lack of merit. They said former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos issued orders that classified the submerged areas around Smokey Mountain as alienable or disposable public lands. Chavez had asked the tribunal on Aug. 5 to void the joint venture agreement between the National Housing Authority and R-II Builders, Inc. to develop Smokey Mountain since it allows a private corporation to acquire at least 79 hectares of public land reclaimed from Manila Bay. *Philip C. Tubeza*

International monitors arriving this week

A 60-MAN international team to monitor a ceasefire between the Philippines and Muslim separatist rebels will arrive this week, a senior diplomat said Monday. The team of 50 security experts from Malaysia and 10 from Brunei will join nine Malaysians who arrived earlier this month in Mindanao, said Foreign Undersecretary for Special Concerns Rafael Seguis. The group is expected to arrive in Manila on Thursday before flying to the south. Mindanao island is the southern third of the mainly Catholic Philippines, where Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels have been waging a 26-year rebellion for the establishment of an independent Islamic state. Seguis said he was optimistic that a peace agreement between the MILF and the government could be signed this year *AFP*

Jalosjos suffers heart attack

By Philip C. Tubeza and Nancy C. Carvajal

JALOSJOS

FORMER Zamboanga Rep. Romeo Jalosjos was rushed to the Makati Medical Center over the weekend after he suffered a heart attack, a New Bilibid Prisons official said yesterday. The congressman was reportedly in critical condition.

Penal Supt. Mario Trasmonte said Jalosjos, who is serving two life terms at the national penitentiary in Muntinlupa City for the rape of an 11-year-old girl, suffered the attack in his cell and was taken to the hospital before noon on Saturday.

"It was just before lunchtime. He complained that half of his body felt numb," Trasmonte said.

He said doctors at the NBP hospital examined Jalosjos and found that he was suffering from coronary heart disease and hypertension and recommended that he be taken to a bigger facility.

"It was an emergency case. Our ambulance took him and we provided the escorts," Trasmonte said.

He said Jalosjos was still at the hospital as of noon yesterday and he had yet to receive an update on his condition.

As of press time yesterday, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said he had not received a report on Jalosjos' condition. The Department of Justice oversees the NBP.

Jalosjos was convicted by a Makati court on Dec. 12, 1997 of two counts of rape and six counts of committing acts of lasciviousness on a minor. He was sentenced to two life terms plus 72 years at the NBP for the crime.

'A MILESTONE'

GMA hails 'no-strike' pact

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo joins hands with labor, business and government leaders after the signing of an accord on industrial peace. PCPO-MALACAÑANG

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday commended the signing of a landmark accord between labor unions and business groups where both agreed to follow a "no strike-no retrenchment" policy for as long as the government has not successfully addressed the fiscal crisis.

Labor leaders and government officials gave assurance that the agreement would not undercut petitions for a wage increase seen as inevitable in the face of the recent hikes in the prices of fuel and basic commodities.

"This a milestone," President Arroyo beamed after the signing of the Social Accord for Industrial Peace and Stability at the Executive Guest House in Malacañang.

Under the agreement, the mainstream labor unions—whose number accounts for two-thirds of organized labor in the country—agreed to "exercise maximum restraint in declaring or staging strikes, work slowdowns and other forms of work stoppages."

For their part, the business groups, represented by the Employers Confederation of the Philippines, agreed to "exercise maximum restraint in the retrenchment of employees, suspension of operations and lockout of businesses."

The employers further pledged to take all possible alternative measures to preserve jobs and prevent adding to the unemployment rate, now at a record 13 percent.

Both camps agreed that a labor strike or plant closure would only be taken as a last resort.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said that the accord was open-ended. "It's indefinite. It will be there while the crisis lasts," she said.

Sto. Tomas disclosed that the government brokered the deal. She added that it took two months to convince both sides to sign.

She said it was more difficult to persuade businessmen to make a commitment not to cut their workforce than extract a promise from labor unions to forego labor strikes. "We faced stiffer resistance from businessmen understandably because some of them might be losing money," she said.

Sto. Tomas said the accord was special because it was the first time that the President was on hand to witness its signing.

She said this indicated the importance the President attached to the maintenance of industrial peace and the preservation of jobs while she focused on solving the ballooning budget deficit and rising debt expenses.

Sto. Tomas said that the accord was different from previous agreements because its language was clearer on a no-strike, no-retrenchment policy. "It's a voluntary agreement. While there are no sanctions, both parties are bound by their word of honor," she said.

"There have been previous social accords that mainstream labor groups have signed but this accord is special because it has a monitoring provision to ensure that all parties keep their end of the bargain," said Vladimir R. Tupas, secretary general of Trade Unions of the Philippines and Allied Services, one of the accord's signatories.

Dayrit booed at forum

By Martin P. Marfil

HEALTH Secretary Manuel Dayrit was booed yesterday at a population forum after disclosing that local health centers had abundant supplies of contraceptives that were "underutilized." **(See related story on page 7.)**

Dayrit, who was the keynote speaker at a forum on population and development in a Pasay City hotel, remarked that the incident showed various health groups were different from each other.

"I'm used to that. This is the reproductive health group. I don't take it against them," Dayrit told reporters after his speech.

Dayrit had been criticized by various population groups because of the Department of Health's "hands off" policy on contraception.

Roberto Ador, head of the Philippine Legislators Committee on Population and Development, said that the audience showed their displeasure because Dayrit used wrong data in an apparent bid to show that there was no population growth.

Erap lawyer to file raps vs Ombudsman

By Armand N. Nocum

LAWYERS for ousted President Joseph Estrada are set to file charges of dereliction of duty against the Ombudsman for dismissing the graft case against alleged accomplices of Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson in the reported diversion of P170 million in tobacco excise taxes.

Defense lead counsel Rene Saguisag yesterday accused the Office of the Ombudsman of committing "prosecutorial misconduct" after it withdrew the information in the criminal case against former Ilocos Sur Gov. Deogracias Victor Savellano and nine others, which resulted in the dismissal of the case before the Sandiganbayan in January.

Although it considered Singson the "most guilty," the Ombudsman said the immunity granted to him in exchange for his testimony against Estrada had made it pointless to pursue the case against his co-accused.

Savellano, Ilocos Sur vice governor under Singson in 1998-2001, and nine other local officials were indicted for allegedly conspiring with Singson to cover up the diversion of P170 million which had been released by the Department of Budget and Management for the development of the tobacco industry in Ilocos Sur.

Singson had claimed the money ended up with Estrada and that Malacañang at the time even helped to cover it up.

But Saguisag accused the Ombudsman of a "cover up" when it withdrew the case.

"We see here a lack of candor and consistency on the part of the prosecution," he said, pointing out that while the Ombudsman was working hard to prosecute Estrada, it was slow in going after Singson and the other accused.

Contrary to Singson's claim that he had participated in the alleged fund diversion after being pressured by Estrada, Saguisag said the defense had presented and will present Commission on Audit officials who would testify that, on his own, Singson was involved in fund irregularities amounting to close to a billion pesos.

"Chavit's record shows he does not need prodding from anybody to commit graft," Saguisag told reporters after a hearing on the Estrada case yesterday. "By the time we present all the evidence, he will come out as most guilty."

The "paper trail is very clear," Saguisag added.

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GMA apologizes to Inquirer reporter

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday apologized to an INQUIRER reporter who was barred by members of the Presidential Security Group (PSG) from entering Malacañang on Sept. 19.

"Sorry, I already made them undergo a seminar," Ms Arroyo told Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., an INQUIRER reporter assigned to cover Malacañang, when she saw him during a coverage yesterday at the Premier Guesthouse.

In saying sorry, the President outdid her PSG chief Col. Delfin Bangit who stood by his men when Cabacungan filed a complaint against the PSG guards whom he accused of harassment.

Cabacungan filed a written complaint to Bangit against the PSG guards who refused him entry and held him off for an hour on Sept. 19, a Sunday, as he reported for work at the Kalayaan Hall.

Bangit, in responding to Cabacungan's letter, said it was "unfortunate that you got angry with my men as they did their job." He identified one of the PSG guards as Airman Second Class Eduardo Llamido.

Nevertheless, Bangit said he has implemented measures to prevent a repeat of the incident.

In his response on Sept. 22, Bangit said he also summoned the PSG guards who had an altercation with Cabacungan and told them to do their job with professionalism.

He said the commander of the presidential guards would meet with the Malacañang Press Corps, composed of around 60 print, radio and television reporters covering Malacañang, to explain security procedures.

'Brain drain' at the CHEd

4 top execs leave posts

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

TALK about brain drain.

There is nobody on top at the Commission on Higher Education (CHEd) after four of its top officials left their positions.

Chair Bro. Rolando Dizon FSC resigned recently after being on medical leave for several months. Two of the four commissioners, Manuel Punzal and Roqaiya Maglangit, completed their four-year terms in August. And CHEd executive director Dennis Cunanan resigned after only a month in office.

CHEd oversees all public and private colleges and universities. Its officials serve as *de facto* chairs of the boards of regents of all state colleges and universities (SCUs).

A former president of De La Salle University, Dizon tendered his resignation several weeks ago after being on medical leave for months at a time for cancer treatment in the United States.

But President Macapagal-Arroyo only accepted his resignation on Sept. 25, after Dizon went to see her at Malacañang.

Dizon's prolonged medical leave had prompted Punzal and Maglangit to write the President to ask her to replace him.

"At the time, the people at CHEd were complaining to us about the leadership vacuum [at the agency]," Punzal told the INQUIRER yesterday.

"We have nothing against Bro. Dizon. I think he's very capable, being a former president of De La Salle, but he fell ill," Punzal said.

Their letter, however, appeared to discredit Dizon.

In it, Maglangit took issue with the "discrimination" she suffered under Dizon who, she said, never appointed her CHEd officer in charge during his absences, despite giving the other commissioners their turn at being OIC.

Maglangit, the only Muslim commissioner at CHEd, also charged the other commissioners with soliciting money from SCUs for trips abroad.

Maglangit could not be reached yesterday. Punzal would only confirm that Maglangit was never appointed OIC.

Punzal admitted, however, that they knew that Dizon had tendered his resignation before they wrote the President.

But he said they only wanted to ask the President to name a new CHEd chair to fill the leadership vacuum.

Corrections

IN THE LIFESTYLE section of the Oct. 1 issue, a photo caption in Maurice Arcache's column "Toast to Manila's best-dressed ladies" on Page F2 erroneously identified Nando Vasquez-Prada and Mary Lou Prieto as "Maricris and Nando Vasquez."

* * *

IN THE ENTERTAINMENT section of the Sept. 27 issue, an article on the First Golden Screen for Entertainment TV Awards on Page A23 misstated the drama series for which Lorna Tolentino was proclaimed outstanding lead actress. The drama series is "Hanggang Kailan"—not "Hanggang Kailangan."

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses:glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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Whistle-blower wants 'independent' evaluators

A PRIVATE school executive who exposed errors in a government-approved history textbook yesterday asked for "independent" evaluators to review the textbook.

The DepEd last week agreed to re-examine the second year high school textbook, "Asya: Noon, Ngayon at sa Hinaharap" following the disclosure of Antonio Calipjo Go.

Go, the academic supervisor of Marian School in Quezon City, listed 431 errors in the 316-page textbook published by SD Publications.

In an interview yesterday, Go said he would turn over his 82-page list of errors to the DepEd only if third party evaluators are included.

He feared the DepEd and the authors would just shoot down his findings if the review were left up to them.

Go said while the DepEd has chosen some members of the academe to join the review, he would feel better if others would volunteer, too.

"I hope there would be at least two from the private sector who would volunteer to help me validate my findings," he said.

However he said he does not want to get into a debate with the authors or with the DepEd evaluators who had approved the textbook.

Go said even if the "Asya" textbook had "only" 20 major errors, it is already effectively defective.

To get on with correcting the textbook, Go dropped his "demand" for an apology from Secretary Florencio Abad and Undersecretary Juan Miguel Luz for allegedly maligning him.

Go has been on a personal crusade against erroneous textbooks since 1997, filling three cabinets of such textbooks.

"I'm not looking for a fight with DepEd. I don't want to destroy DepEd. Why should I? I only want the DepEd to function as it should," he said.

He said since Abad has just assumed office, the secretary should not have quickly accused him of malicious intent.

Abad has refused to apologize and asked Go to prove first that he deserves an apology.

Dona Pazzibugan

SC tells local governments to lay off cable firms

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE SUPREME Court has ruled that the National Telecommunications Commission, and not local government units, has the exclusive power to regulate subscriber rates of cable television operators.

In a 29-page decision dated Sept. 29, the high court said that the national government, through the NTC, has assumed regulatory power over the community antenna television (CATV) industry for the last two decades.

The court said that there was no law specifically authorizing LGUs to grant franchises to operate a CATV system.

It added that whatever authority the LGUs had before had been withdrawn when the late President Ferdinand Marcos issued Presidential Decree 1512, which terminated all franchises or permits for the operation of CATV systems previously granted by LGUs.

The case stemmed from a petition of Batangas CATV Inc., which operates in Batangas City.

When Batangas CATV increased its subscriber rates from P88 to P180 per month in 1993, the city government threatened to cancel its permit.

The cable operator went to court and the Batangas Regional Trial Court decided in its favor, ruling that neither the mayor of Batangas City nor the city council had the power to fix the subscriber rates of CATV operators.

The high tribunal upheld the RTC ruling.

The high court said that the July 1986 Batangas City council resolution that granted Batangas CATV the permit to operate was defective since it allowed the council to fix the subscriber rates, "a power exclusively vested in the NTC."

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CPP orders NPA to step up attacks on gov't forces

By Norman Bordadora

COMMUNIST Party spokesperson Gregorio Rosal says the object is to "accelerate the overthrow" of the government. FILE PHOTO

THE COMMUNIST Party of the Philippines yesterday called on its armed wing, the New People's Army, to step up its attacks against the military and police "to accelerate the overthrow" of the government.

In a statement, CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said the NPA had been urged to launch bigger and more frequent "tactical offensives" against government forces whenever the opportunity presented itself.

Rosal said the crisis facing the government "is sure to worsen and culminate in a massive uprising by the people, precisely because they have no other choice.

"Anyone willing to join the armed struggle is welcome," Rosal said.

He said the NPA and its 128 guerrilla fronts nationwide were prepared to take in the workers, peasants, students and others who may choose to join the armed struggle.

"If the GMA government insists on going ahead with those numerous tax measures in the face of the people's increasingly insufferable conditions, it would be tantamount to political suicide for GMA," Rosal said.

"Why do we say political suicide? The people suffer so badly. All the people's basic needs have spiraled. Prices and transport fares are high, electric bills are costly, even government fees are being raised," he said.

Rosal said the President was also sending the message that wages could not be raised at this time.

"This is what she tells government employees, this is what she also tells the peasants. This will push the people to unite and wage resistance. We now see the signs, and perhaps in a matter of weeks or months, we will be seeing massive protest actions that will once more rock Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo," he said.

The call for more attacks on the government and the attempt to recruit disgruntled individuals could not have come at a worse time, however. The National Democratic Front, the umbrella organization of the CPP and NPA, has been trying to have the two groups removed from the list of terrorist groups of the United States and the European Union.

The terrorist tag had reportedly cut into the party's finances, freezing its assets and causing contributions from sympathizers to dry up.

Anti-co-op bill called 'anti-poor'

By Carlito Pablo

"ANTI-POOR and unjust."

This was how cooperatives sector party-list Rep. Guillermo Cua described the three bills filed in Congress that seek to strip cooperatives of tax incentives.

"We all know that most co-ops are small and struggling," Cua said. "We must remember that even bigger co-ops are big because hundreds, if not thousands, of less advantaged Filipinos pool their hard-earned money in these co-ops."

Cua was referring to House Bill Nos. 122, 271 and 1599 which involve the rationalization of fiscal and non-fiscal incentives given by government to various industries.

The bills aim to slash tax incentives, including those for cooperatives, to generate additional revenues for the government.

Under the Cooperative Code of the Philippines or Republic Act No. 6938, cooperatives transacting business exclusively with their members are exempted from all taxes.

Cooperatives that do business with non-members but have savings and reserves of not more than P10 million are also exempted from taxes imposed by the national government down to the barangay.

Cooperatives are also exempted from customs duties in the importation of their machinery and spare parts.

HB 1599, authored by Rep. Jesli Lapus (NPC, Tarlac), will do away with such incentives provided under the cooperative code.

Cua said that cooperatives "understand the urgent need to raise revenues and cut expenses in order to bridge the budget deficit.

"But the heavier burden should be borne by those who are better off in society," Cua said.

Cua said that a recent study of the top 300 savings and credit cooperatives shows that the average share and savings deposits combined is only P17,000 per member.

"This proves that even the bigger co-ops cater to poorer Filipinos," Cua said.

Cua pointed out that there is no profit to tax from cooperatives in the first place "because whatever surplus is generated by the co-op is returned to the members in the form of patronage refund and interest on share capital."

The rationalization of fiscal incentives is one of eight revenue measures being sought from Congress by Malacañang.

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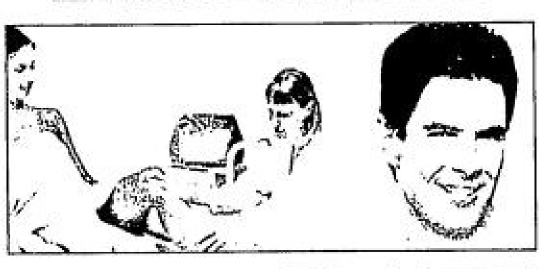

Hunger stalks 15% of Pinoy households

From page A1

second-highest since SWS began monitoring hunger in 1998. The record was 16.1 percent, which SWS found in March 2001.

Of the 15.1 percent of some 15.3 million households, 11.8 percent experienced hunger only once or a few times (termed moderate hunger) while 3.3 percent experienced it often or always (severe hunger).

Highest in 34 months

Data from the National Statistics Office (NSO) showed that inflation jumped sharply in August, rising to its highest level in 34 months at an annualized 6.6 percent partly due to surging global oil prices.

The NSO reported a 10.8-percent increase in the cost of services as of August. To buy the same basket of goods last year, one must earn 7 percent more today, according to economists. But the minimum wage has largely been frozen.

Overall, the cost of living continues to rise faster than the income of most Filipinos.

Cooking gas increased to an average of P360.20 per 11-kg cylinder from P276 last year.

This year, power distributor Manila Electric Co. was allowed to raise its rates twice for a total increase of 30.64 centavos per kilowatt-hour.

In Metro Manila, transportation costs rose after the Light Rail Transit scrapped its single-fare scheme and charged P15, or P3 more, after the first four stations.

Rising diesel prices pushed the minimum jeepney fare to P5.50 from P4. Diesel and unleaded gasoline are retailed at an average of P21.28 and P26.49 per liter, respectively. In September last year, the prices of diesel and gasoline averaged P15.61 and P20.26 per liter, respectively.

The SWS survey also revealed that the prolonged economic hardship had led Filipinos to tighten their belts. Fifty-three percent "self-rated" themselves as poor.

This belt-tightening was shown in the lower levels of self-rated threshold, which refers to the monthly budget that households say they need in order not to be poor, according to SWS.

Residents of Metro Manila said they would need to have at least P10,000 a month so as not to be considered poor. This is P5,000 lower than the poverty threshold of P15,000 three months ago.

In Mindanao, the poverty threshold was also down, from P5,000-P6,000 to only P3,000.

"Since consumer prices are rising rather than falling, a declining poverty threshold means that households have lowered their standards of what it means to be poor," SWS said in a statement.

Extreme poverty

In August, the Asian Development Bank reported that about 12 million Filipinos were trapped in extreme poverty and surviving on less than P56 a day.

The incidence of extreme poverty in the country was lower than the regional average of 21.4 percent. But it was the highest in Southeast Asia after Laos' 30.4 percent and Cambodia's 34.2 percent.

The SWS survey was conducted on Aug. 5-22 and covered 1,200 statistically representative households (300 each in Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao). It had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points for national data and plus or minus 6 percentage points for regional data. *With a report from PDI Research*

Mahathir here for talks with GMA on rebels

FORMER Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad flew into Manila yesterday for talks with President Macapagal-Arroyo on Manila's efforts to end a decades-old Muslim separatist rebellion in the country's south.

Shortly after his arrival, Mahathir went to Malacanang where Ms Arroyo honored him with a formal dinner. He was to speak today before the Philippine Business Conference.

Ms Arroyo was expected to thank Mahathir for Malaysia's role in brokering peace talks between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Mahathir, credited with spurring Malaysia's economic development, and Ms Arroyo are also expected to discuss Philippine efforts to ease a huge budget deficit and a fiscal crisis.

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said Ms Arroyo "would welcome any advice that Dr. Mahathir may wish to give."

Malaysia has hosted the resumption of peace talks between the government and the MILF and is leading a mission from Muslim countries, to monitor a ceasefire in place between the two sides on strife-torn Mindanao.

The 12,000-strong MILF has been fighting to set up a separate Islamic state in the south of this largely Christian archipelago.

The rebels signed a truce with Manila two years ago and denounced foreign terrorist links, paving the way for the reopening of peace negotiations.

There have been allegations by security officials that the MILF is still sheltering members of the Jemaah Islamiyah regional terror network in its camps on Mindanao. MILF leaders denied this.

Officials also said Ms Arroyo would thank several leaders of Southeast Asian and European nations for supporting the peace process with the MILF when she attends the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) in Hanoi from Oct. 7 to 9.

EDWIN BACASMAS

PRESIDENT Arroyo and former President Fidel V. Ramos welcome former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad and his wife Tun Dr. Siti Hasmah to Malacañang.

"With the arrival of the international peace monitors and sustained cessation of hostilities between the MILF and our military, the president can inform world leaders present at the ASEM summit that the... peace agenda is now at an advanced stage," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said. *with reports from AFP*

Speculators fail to crack peso, Asian currencies

From page A1

It's a similar story in Japan and China, where the stakes are much higher.

So far, 2004 has not been the year of the speculator in Asia, and it is clear that the region is no longer the pushover for speculators that it was in 1997.

The region now has foreign exchange reserves reaching over $2.2 trillion, up 16 percent since the end of 2003. Asian currencies are even under pressure to appreciate because of robust trade surpluses.

In 1998, the region had less than $800 billion in forex reserves. Low reserves and disproportionate levels of short-term dollar debt forced the virtually pegged currencies in Asia to succumb to speculative pressure.

That has changed radically.

"People are not targeting any particular exchange rate, there is some ambiguity about the level that the central bank will defend, the overvaluation of the Asian currencies is either less or completely eliminated and forex reserves are high," said Simon Flint, a currency strategist with Bank of America in Singapore.

"All these things mean that speculative attacks against currencies are much less likely to work these days," Flint said.

Most Asian currencies, barring the Chinese yuan, Malaysian ringgit and Hong Kong dollar, are floating. Speculators can never tell if a currency has moved too far.

Peso spared

The last big successful speculative attack in Asia resulted in the 1997-98 currency crisis when heavy bets against the Thai baht and Indonesian rupiah pushed those currencies into free fall.

This year, after three speculative attacks, the Philippine peso has shed less than 1.5 percent.

The peso hit a record low of 56.45 per dollar in March, ahead of an election that kept President Macapagal-Arroyo in power. Even so, the Philippine currency has weathered a ratings downgrade, Ms Arroyo's warning of a fiscal crisis and the resignation of the national treasurer last month.

Speculators would normally pounce on the peso. Philippine exports are slowing and public debt is around 120 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Yet, when the peso revisited its historic low last week, the BSP—with less than $16 billion in forex reserves—easily stemmed the currency's slide.

"The fear of the central bank and the interest rate argument are important," Flint said.

Philippine interest rates are nearly 6 percentage points higher than in the United States, making the peso expensive to borrow and sell.

Big speculators have made more money this year betting on oil, and the Turkish lira and South African rand.

Speculators did weaken the Korean won 2.5 percent over two days in October last year, and the Singapore dollar sank by a similar amount over a few days in May 2004.

"The speculative community generally likes Asia as a story still, but is not putting any money to work on that," said Cliff Tan, a currency strategist with the Citigroup. "This year has not been very directional, it has been frustrating."

Even George Soros, arguably the world's most famous currency speculator after making a fortune from Europe's currency crises in the early 1990s, vented his frustration last week.

"We currency speculators are more likely to die of boredom," he said.

Formidable forces

Speculators are up against a much tougher challenge in Asia than they were in the late 1990s because central banks are better equipped to head them off with regulatory restrictions.

"The ability to legislate and introduce exchange rate requirements etc. ... generally Asia has been able to use those more successfully this time around," said Robert Rennie, currency strategist with Westpac Bank in Sydney.

Thailand's central bank scuttled a speculative attempt to push the baht higher last year by restricting the onshore market's trades with offshore. South Korea did the same this year. The Philippines raised reserve requirements for banks.

Capital account restrictions in China force speculators wanting exposure to the Chinese yuan to use the offshore nondeliverable forward market.

Because offshore nondeliverable forward contracts are settled in dollars and have scant impact on the Chinese economy, Beijing was unperturbed last year when the price of the yuan offshore swung from a discount to a 6-percent premium against the dollar.

Bets that the Japanese yen would rise to 100 per dollar came to naught. Japan spent a record 20 trillion yen ($181 billion) on yen-selling intervention last year and has set aside up to 140 trillion yen for possible intervention in the year to March 2005.

"It is mind-boggling. Which trader out there is going to even dream of taking on a force such as that?" Rennie said. *Reuters*

Separation pay of GOCC worker may reach ₱1.5M

From page A1

hood Resource Center, National Irrigation Administration, National Tobacco Administration, National Development Company, Philippine Coconut Authority, Al-Amanah Islamic Investment Bank of the Philippines, Philippine Television Network Inc., Human Settlement Development Corp., Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. and National Housing Authority.

They lost a total of P20 billion in 2003.

Legislators' support

A reform-oriented religious group supported the plan to abolish losing GOCCs and GFIs but urged Malacañang to review its stand on the foreign debt.

"If the President has a judgment that some GOCCs should go, she should just abolish them ... as long as the agencies are ineffective and inefficient," said Anthony Cruz, communication director of Bangon Pilipinas National Renewal Movement.

Also supporting the abolition of the 15 GOCCs and GFIs are Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. and House Deputy Majority Leader Del de Guzman (Lakas, Marikina City), Rep. Vincent Garcia (NPC, Davao City) and Rep. Alfredo Marañon III (NPC, Negros Occidental).

Villar said the Palace ultimatum for losing GOCCs and GFIs to shape up or ship out was "long overdue."

In a statement, Villar said these GOCCs and GFIs "are not only wallowing in debts and losses; (but are also) relying hugely on government subsidies to finance their operations."

Villar said he had already filed a bill seeking to repeal the provisions in the charters of GOCCs and GFIs pertaining to their executives' salary structures. The bill is aimed at making their salaries conform with the principles of the Salary Standardization Law.

The respective charters of the GOCCs exempt them from the Salary Standardization Law.

Several proposals for the standardization of their salaries are pending before the House appropriations committee chaired by Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. (LP, Camarines Sur).

No need for law

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Malacañang no longer saw the need for Congress to enact a law to reorganize the GOCCs.

"According to (Budget) Secretary (Emilia) Boncodin, it could just be an executive action, not necessarily having to get legislation for it. But whatever it is, we still have to sit down with Mercy Gutierrez because she is the chief presidential legal counsel," Ermita told reporters before Malacañang issued the order.

Boncodin earlier said: "We can abolish the nonperforming GOCCs altogether if the administration sees no viable effort among its officials to turn these corporations around."

The budget chief was tasked by the President with reviewing the performance of the GOCCs and GFIs and to put a cap on the salaries of their top executives.

"The ball is in the court of losing government firms," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a statement, explaining the EO.

"The board and management of GOCCs and GFIs have a fair chance to show their capacity to turn around the losing firms, or preside over the abolition or privatization of the hopeless cases," Bunye said.

Mismanaged

Garcia said the abolition of the losing GOCCs was a "practicable and reasonable" decision on the part of the government which could no longer subsidize their operations.

"These losing GOCCs siphon off government funds that should go to social services and infrastructure development for the benefit of the people," he said.

Garcia said standardizing the salaries of executives of GOCCs and GFIs would not reduce the losses these firms had been incurring.

Marañon said most of the losing agencies were clearly mismanaged. He said government agencies should be managed and operated like business firms, with quality service and low expenditures.

For his part, Rep. Renato Magtubo of the party-list group Partido ng Manggagawa said Malacañang's statement for the GOCCs to "shape up or face the ax" was a go-signal for them to privatize their assets.

Magtubo said Ms Arroyo must first push for an investigation of the GOCCs to find out why and how they accumulated billions in net losses.

"A probe would lead us to the bottom of the question why these GOCCs were losing billions. It is a hasty decision for Malacañang to abolish or privatize them without even knowing who are responsible for the mess," he said.

Review

In EO 366, the President directed all Cabinet secretaries to "conduct a strategic review of the operations and organization of component units, including agencies attached to or under the administrative supervision of their respective departments.

"The department secretary shall prepare a rationalization plan for the whole department, including the agencies and government-owned and -controlled corporations attached to or under its administrative supervision," she said.

The order did not specify the GOCCs to be covered by the rationalization.

The review is meant to focus government efforts and resources on core services and to improve the quality and efficiency of the delivery of the services by eliminating duplication, it stated.

The rationalization plan will be submitted to Boncodin and eventually to the President for approval.

Two options

Under the EO, employees affected by the rationalization program will be given two options: "remain in government service, if with permanent appointment attested to by the Civil Service Commission" or avail themselves of the retirement and separation benefits laid down in the EO.

Those who opt to be separated from the service could avail themselves of either of two schemes: the retirement gratuity provided under Republic Act No. 1616, an Act Further Amending Section 12 of Commonwealth Act No. 186, plus the refunds of retirement premiums by the Government Service Insurance System; or retirement benefits under Republic Act No. 660 plus the following incentives: half month of basic salary for every year for those who had rendered 20 years of service and below, 3/4 month for those who had rendered 21 to 30 years of service, or one month for those who had served 31 years or more.

Permanent or casual employees are qualified to avail themselves of the incentives, which the President had called a "silver parachute."

"No affected employee who opted for retirement/separation shall receive less than an aggregate of P50,000 as his retirement/separation gratuity benefit from both the national government and the GSIS," the EO said.

"In the case of employees belonging to agencies and GOCCs exempted from or not following the Salary Standardization Law, the total amount of incentives to be received shall not exceed P1.5 (million)," it said.

Incentives for GOCC employees will come from the corporation concerned but the government will pay for the retirement of the employees of GOCCs that observe the SSL.

The EO makes it risky for employees of agencies targeted for abolition to opt to stay. If they are transferred to another agency by the Civil Service Commission, their appointments will be co-terminus with the incumbent official who appointed them.

If employees object to their new job assignment, they will be deemed separated or retired and will get retirement pay without the additional benefits.

Ms Arroyo said constitutional offices, the legislative branch and state colleges and universities may "on a voluntary basis" adopt the EO. *With reports from Cynthia D. Balana, Christine O. Avendaño and Martin P. Marfil*

Biazon on DOH family planning: 'Gobbledygook'

By Christine O. Avendaño

SEN. RODOLFO Biazon yesterday said he would ask the Department of Health to spell out once and for all the government's policy on family planning during the Senate deliberations on the health budget for 2005.

Biazon disclosed his plan as he dismissed as "gobbledygook" the presentation made yesterday by Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit on the government's family planning policy. Biazon attended the 10th year anniversary of the International Committee on Population and Development where Dayrit was the key speaker.

Dayrit outlined the government's program for family planning which, Biazon said, seemed to "divert our attention away from the need for family planning services, including access to medical services and family planning supplies."

"Basically, the main thought that I got from him (Dayrit) is that the government is leaving it [family planning] to the local government units' initiatives."

"That will be a weak program indeed," the senator said.

That's why, he said, there was a need to approve the reproductive health bill he authored which "define a national policy on reproductive health, specifically on adoption of a family planning program."

Scheme benefits 4 Manila hospitals

THE CITY government of Manila has saved some P5 million following the implementation of a new scheme to repair and maintain medical equipment in four city hospitals and facilities.

The new scheme, called the Medical Equipment Management System (MEMS), has increased the city government's capability to provide maternal and child care to poor patients.

MEMS is funded by the European Community under the Asia URBS Funding Line.

Project partners include the province of Pisa in Italy, the municipality of Plasencia in Spain, and other non-government organizations.

Allesandro Iellamo, Asia URBS consultant, said the equipment repair scheme is vital in bringing about improved health services to the poor.

Are you king, hunter or lover?

HOW does it feel to be a man these days? What are issues special to men? What is the male psyche?

To answer these questions, The Friends of Jung Society of the Philippines will hold a two-day men's workshop at the Ricco-Renzo Galleries in Makati City on Oct. 15-16, 2004.

Lectures, archetypes of the male psyche, and a riveting myth will be the tools used for this inner exploration.

Resource persons are Dr. Dido Gustilo, Raj Mansukhani, Bernie Nepomuceno, Sophie Sim-Bate, Alex Tee and Rose Marie Yenko. These persons are steeped in the field of Jungian psychology and have taught Jungian classes at the Ateneo de Manila University and De La Salle University.

Only 20 slots are available. Workshop fee is P4,800. This includes materials, snacks and lunch. For reservations, call Marina at 892-46-10 and 0917-815-61-43; and Lito at 898-38-26 and 0916-302-3763.

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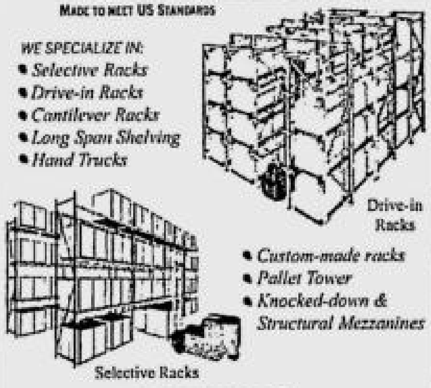

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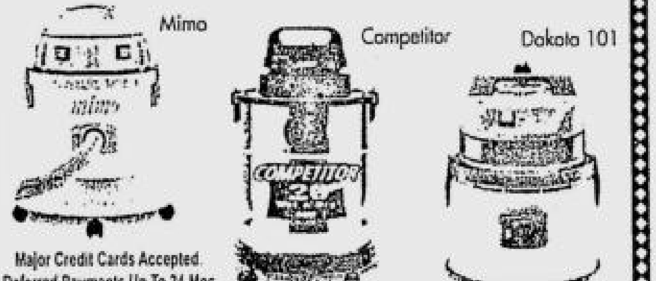

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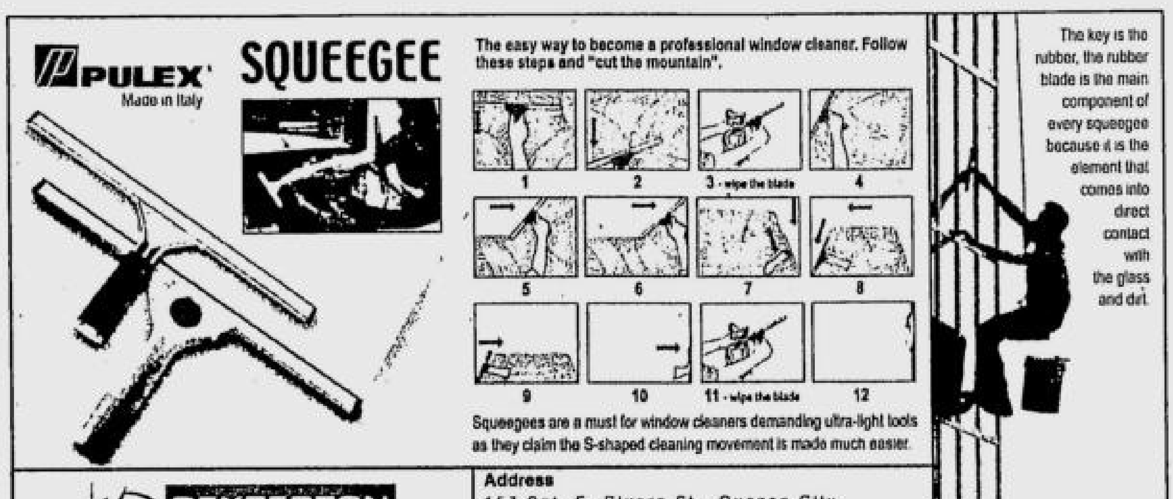

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Guerrilla legend shares 'survival' skills

From page A1

groups who could not grow their own.

They would also try to delay enemy movements if they got advanced information that Japanese troops were heading toward patches of cultivated land—so that the plants could either be temporarily covered with soil or the fruits hastily gathered.

Once a certain village had been shielded from the invaders, residents from the poblacion (town center) would be asked to come over and help in the farming, Taruc said.

"Bananas can bear fruit in just six months. Kamote can give you talbos (*shoots*) in a matter of weeks. You can plant a papaya seed almost anywhere, even without preparing the soil," he said, recalling how food was grown between battles and ambushes.

Vegetables, simple living

Singkamas or turnips proved to be an effective thirst-quencher—and sometimes the only edible item available—for his troops, he said.

Taruc surrendered to the government in May 1954 following negotiations with then President Ramon Magsaysay's emissary, the assassinated opposition leader Benigno Aquino Jr., then a young newspaperman.

The Huk supremo was also elected congressman after the war, from 1946 to 1949, and later served as a sectoral representative for six years in the Interim Batasang Pambansa during the Marcos regime.

He attributed his long life—not surprisingly—to a diet of vegetables and "simple living."

At one point in his talk, Taruc told the audience: "Your age is just half of mine. Believe me, you still have much to accomplish."

'Warlike situation'

Reyes slammed the government's trade liberalization policies which he said had stunted rather than stimulated local agriculture.

"These are difficult times. We are in a warlike situation where life seems like a daily struggle to survive," the activist priest said.

To cope with rising food prices and reduce the country's dependence on food imports, Reyes said it was high time both urban dwellers and rural folk used up every square inch of soil to produce their own fruits and vegetables.

"We can start planting now in vacant lots, in pots, pails, cans, etc. Nothing will be left idle and unproductive," he said.

Reyes directed the appeal to the various agencies and sectors which sent representatives to the launching program, including the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police, universities, public schools and local government units.

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CHARITO Planas digs a hole to plant a coconut seedling at the Quezon Memorial Circle during the launching of the "Coconut, Kamote Kita" campaign. Looking on are Fr. Robert Reyes (center) and Luis Taruc (third from left). JOAN BONDOC

AFP orders suspension of general

From page A1

Ignacio Bunye said. "What applies to the civilian officials applies to the military in a stricter sense."

Bunye added: "Any general officer who enriches himself at the expense of the soldier is a shame to the command and will be brought to justice. The AFP has been directed to work closely with the Ombudsman in probing cases of unexplained wealth within the command and mete out maximum sanctions."

Abaya, who was Garcia's classmate at the Philippine Military Academy, gave the officer 10 days to answer the charges.

The military statement said that sometime in February, Abaya's office received reports that one of Garcia's sons was held at the San Francisco airport in the US for failing to declare $100,000 in cash that he was carrying.

Abaya immediately ordered the Office of Ethical Standards and Public Accountability (Oespa)—headed by Vice Admiral Ariston de los Reyes, another of Garcia's PMA classmates—to investigate the incident.

Unable to proceed further for lack of sufficient evidence, the military nevertheless transferred Garcia from the post of comptroller in charge of funds and budget management to chief of plans and program, the statement said.

Retiring in 2 months

A few weeks ago, the Ombudsman asked the AFP for information on Garcia and De los Reyes submitted Garcia's services record and his Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN).

The charges alleged that Garcia "failed to declare several assets in his SALN and that his increase in net worth is disproportionate to his legitimate income," according to the announcement.

Garcia was supposed to retire on Nov. 18.

"He will have to face the charges. One cannot retire from the Armed Forces if one is facing charges so it will be put on hold until the resolution of the case," Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan said .

Adan said that before the Ombudsman's order came, Garcia filed for terminal leave, a practice among departing officers so that they could attend to their retirement papers.

Unhampered probe

"Since the AFP received the (Ombudsman's) order, the terminal leave has been recalled and he (Garcia) is now under preventive suspension following the directive of the Ombudsman," Adan added.

Adan said the suspension of an official under probe was called for "so that (he) cannot influence the investigation."

Adan said the AFP could not release Garcia's SALN to media.

"These records, which are submitted annually and required of any public official, are not just ordinary papers that any Tom, Dick and Harry can (ask for)."

He also explained that last year, the SALNs of AFP officers were released to media.

No trial by publicity

"In fact, those were already published but not anyone can ask for a copy of the SALN of a general or a colonel," Adan said. "That is not what we want to happen because we don't know how this will be used. But if there is justification, like in this case, a proper investigative body is asking for this, there is no reason to hold it and we cooperate."

Adan added: "The public's right is still served provided it is done through due process, through the proper agencies. We don't want to subject the officer (in question) to various interpretations. It (SALN) might fall into the wrong hands in the first place ... That is why the request (for the SALN) must be done properly."

Adan appealed to the media "not to prejudge the case or engage in trial by publicity but let the Ombudsman's proceedings proceed."

Asked why the AFP leadership was making the disclosure of Garcia's case only now, Adan said the AFP wanted Garcia to give his side of the story.

"One of our reasons here is we want General Garcia to air his side first so that he can tell you both sides, his side and what are the charges. On the part of the AFP, our side here is to implement the order," Adan said.

"We will cooperate with the investigation and the chief of staff has made it clear that this is an individual case and that General Garcia has the right to answer the charges."

Cause of unrest

Adan made his statements the same day that reports of the detention of one of Garcia's sons at the San Francisco airport came out in local media.

Adan said Garcia would answer the Ombudsman's charges soon.

Ms Arroyo has ordered the Ombudsman to conduct random checks on the lifestyles of government officials to ferret out those who have posh houses and expensive cars despite their small salaries.

Some officials have been suspended or dismissed.

Allegations of corruption within the military have provoked unrest among soldiers.

The Philippines is ranked as one of the most corrupt places in Asia by Transparency International and other watchdogs.

Last year, a group of junior officers led around 300 men in a short-lived mutiny seizing the Oakwood hotel in Makati and demanding the firing of top defense and military officials for alleged corruption.

They had accused senior officers of enriching themselves while enlisted men died fighting insurgents without proper equipment. *With reports from Alcuin Papa and AFP*

Rio's last wish: Bibles for friends

From page A1

and placing orders for Bibles. It was another of Rio's last wishes that these be distributed to friends and relatives who would turn up at the wake.

"I told Claudia to kiss her mother's hand and tell her that we were sending our love," Gretchen recalled their last "communication."

In March, Charlie had brought their children—Claudia, 9, and Jaime, 7—to California to be with their mother, whose condition had worsened. Although Rio's health had taken several precarious dives before, it was the first time that her doctors—noting how she was rejecting the last blood transfusions—had given up.

Final moments

Seven of Rio's nine sisters were with her at Daly City's Seaton Hospital in her final hour. According to her mother-in-law, she remained conscious even as her system started to shut down.

Sources close to the family described Charlie as "very calm," although Gretchen said it had been "torture" for him to watch his wife slip away.

Tarlac Rep. Mark Cojuangco, Charlie's brother, and his wife Kimi were also there.

Gretchen said Rio almost died on Friday but that the next day, she surprised everyone when she sat up and asked to talk to Ali, her 21-year-old son by first husband Hajji Alejandro.

It was the last surprise she would pull. In the past, she had astonished nurses and other staff at Stanford University by insisting on helping other patients after her grueling four- to six-hour chemotherapy sessions. They called her "The Sunshine Girl."

She also had several remissions, the most stunning of which was in January 2003, when she woke up from a 10-day coma

RIO DIAZ-COJUANGCO

against all odds.

Two wakes

In accordance with her will, Rio will be cremated in the US. Her ashes will be brought home to the Philippines, where two public wakes will be held—one at Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park, Makati City, and another at St. Michael's Church in Pontevedra town in Negros Occidental, where she once served as vice mayor.

A pall fell over Hacienda Balbina, as the household staff and workers recalled Rio's generosity and the good times they had with her.

Rio was diagnosed with colon cancer in December 1998. She was brought to the US for treatment and was declared "cured" in April 1999. She came home three months later and publicly spoke about her miraculous healing.

But in 2001, she went back to the US, where doctors found that the cancer had spread to her blood cells. She was in and out of the hospital since then. In January, she was not allowed to leave Seaton.

Charlie did not come home even to campaign or vote for himself during the May elections. Even so, he won a third term and Rio would not be stopped from leaving the hospital so she could witness his oath-taking at the Philippine Consulate in San Francisco.

Gretchen said Charlie, even as he coped with the pain of watching his ailing wife's struggle, had to be nanny, driver and cook for his children. It helped a lot, she said, that Claudia and Jaime had been well-prepared for the inevitable.

In an interview with the INQUIRER in 2002, Rio said she had kept nothing from her children.

A classmate of Jaime's died, she recounted, and when she asked the boy how he felt, he said: "I'm okay, Mama. I will miss my classmate, but you ... I will see you again. When you die, you're with Jesus so I should be happy."

At the time, Rio said the extension on her life was an "undeserved" gift from God. A born-again Christian, she always said her close relationship with Jesus Christ was what got her through the worst of times. She repeatedly thanked all the people who prayed for her, "even those I have not met."

Beauty inside and out

Rosario "Rio" Diaz-Cojuangco was the youngest of 12 children born to Jaime Diaz and Teresa Aspillera. She was the sister of Gloria Diaz, Miss Universe 1969.

A ramp and commercial model, Rio herself was crowned Mutya ng Pilipinas in 1977 and won fourth runner-up in the Miss Asia pageant that same year.

In August 1994, she married Charlie, whom she met on a blind date. She was elected elected vice mayor of Pontevedra in the May 1998 elections, when Charlie first won a seat in Congress. She became president of the vice mayors' league in Negros Occidental.

During a routine checkup in December 1998, her doctors in the United States informed her of a small growth in her left abdomen. After a six-hour surgery, they told her they had found a malignant tumor in its fourth stage.

She underwent another surgery, and then chemotherapy for three months. In 1999 her oncologist, Dr. George Fisher at Stanford, declared she had been cured.

When the cancer cells made a comeback in May 2000, Rio returned to Stanford for another eight-hour surgery, and another round of chemotherapy sessions.

In 2002, she stopped the sessions because her body could no longer take it. But later that year, Rio's doctors said she had no recourse but to do it again.

Afflicted with hope

At the time of her astounding remission in early 2003, the family members had braced themselves for the worst. Rio would later describe the 10-day coma as "one long sleep." She said the images of her children, especially little Jaime, caressing her and thanking God through their tears soon after she gained consciousness were forever seared in her memory.

She never stopped sharing her positivity with other cancer patients. Even while her health deteriorated last year, she finished a 20-minute video promoting cancer awareness.

Titled "Afflicted with Hope," the video features other patients and their families and discusses ways of coping. Best of all, it sparkles with Rio's deep faith in Christ and the happiness she has discovered beyond the adversity.

As she once said in a television interview: "If I never had cancer, I wouldn't have found this much love for others, or received just as much love from them." *With PDI Research*

Ex-agri chief doesn't impress Ombudsman

From page A1

prove that he spent his own millions during his three-year stint in government.

Ombudsman spokesperson Ernesto Nocos said this was the first time that an official accused of stealing from the government was instead claiming he had donated money to it.

Lorenzo made the claim on Saturday as a defense to charges that he had used government funds to maintain a lavish lifestyle.

Reacting to the statement that Lorenzo had given to the INQUIRER, Nocos said coldly: "He must present evidence and we will act accordingly."

COA executive assistant Juanito Recio took the same position. In a separate interview, Recio said it wasn't a crime to give money to the government, but anyone saying he did should show proof.

This is a requirement in civil law, according to Recio, who is also the COA spokesperson.

'Validated' by GMA

Earlier, Nocos said the Ombudsman was awaiting a COA report relative to the charges against the former agriculture chief before a formal investigation could be undertaken.

COA records show that Lorenzo charged to agencies attached to the Department of Agriculture P324,287 in cell phone bills and P2.9 million for charter flights.

Lorenzo, a scion of the Davao-based family that controls Del Monte Philippines Inc., is reputed to be the richest official in the Arroyo administration, with a declared net worth of P512.122 million in 2003.

But another ranking Ombudsman official said that "instead of being condemned," the former secretary should be given a plaque of appreciation "and a pat on the back" for donating to the government.

Lorenzo's gesture was "validated" by President Macapagal-Arroyo's call for rich businessmen and officials to help solve the fiscal crisis with cash donations, the official said. "We can consider that charity for a government that is begging all over the place."

Are you kidding?

Appreciation is the farthest thing on the mind of one of Lorenzo's accusers.

Party-list Rep. Rafael Mariano (Anakpawis), who called attention to the cell phone bills last week, took exception to yet another claim of the former DA chief that the agriculture sector posted a record growth during his term.

Mariano rebutted this with data from the National Statistics Office that showed close to 500,000 farmers and fishermen were displaced under Lorenzo's watch.

"Where is the so-called growth ... generated through [his] cell phone-assisted management?" Mariano demanded.

According to the NSO's labor statistics table, the estimated 6.1 million employed farmers, forestry workers and fishermen as of April 2003, had dropped to 5.7 million by April 2004.

Lorenzo was appointed agriculture chief in December 2002 and resigned last June.

Now he is concurrent chair of the DA's Quedan Rural Credit and Guarantee Corp., which the COA said he asked to pay for the phone bills, and of the Land Bank of the Philippines.

Mariano likewise demanded that Lorenzo explain why net losses of the National Food Authority, another DA agency, had risen to P7.6 billion. The former DA chief is also being criticized for having used some P5.3 million of El Niño control funds to buy radio spots, even when there was no drought.

"[And now he is saying] his cell phone and Lear jet expenses contributed to the agriculture sector's growth?" Mariano bristled. "What person in his right mind would buy that?"

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bush campaign on defensive amid questions on Iraq intel

WASHINGTON—Already scrambling to make up ground lost after last week's debate, US President George W. Bush's campaign was forced further on the defensive Sunday by a report that the White House knew before invading Iraq that key intelligence on the country's alleged nuclear weapons program was questionable.

National security adviser Condoleezza Rice said Sunday she knew of a debate within the US government about the purpose of aluminum tubes found in Iraq, which she and other officials had brandished before the war as proof of Saddam Hussein's nuclear ambitions.

In a series of television interviews Sunday, Rice insisted however that she only later learned that the energy department believed the aluminum tubes were actually meant for conventional weapons, denying a report in The New York Times that she knew of those concerns before using the tubes to argue for war.

"At that time we understood there were some debates within the intelligence community. I later learned that the Energy Department believed that these tubes might be for something else," she told NBC television's "Today Show."

Speaking on the campaign trail in the town of Austintown, Ohio Sunday, Democratic presidential hopeful John Kerry said Times report is a stinging indictment of the Bush administration's prewar intelligence and foreign policy judgment.

"There are very serious questions about whether the administration was open and honest in making the case for war in Iraq," Kerry said on a campaign sweep taking him through several rust-belt communities.

"These are questions that the president must face. These are question that the president has to answer fully to the American people and the troops," he said.

Kerry's campaign spokesperson Joe Lockhart expanded on those concerns

"Secretary (of State Colin) Powell went up and based most of his assessment on Saddam's nuclear threat on these aluminum tubes to the United Nations," he said.

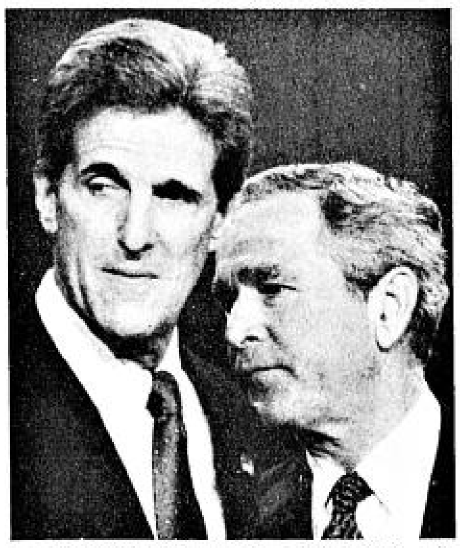
"Condoleezza Rice raised the specter of a mushroom cloud... Vice President Cheney... didn't say there was debate. He said this was a fact."

"This is about what the president knew, what he withheld from the American public, if anything," Lockhartt said. "These are questions he should answer now."

Democratic Sen. Bob Graham accused the White House of deliberately using information it knew to be false to bolster the case for invading Iraq.

"It is an outrage of tremendous proportions, and is not only a statement of the intelligence of this administration, but the fundamental character of this administration that they would so mislead the citizens of the United States and the world," Graham told reporters.

The report is another blow to White House credibility on foreign policy matter as the presidential campaign enters a critical 10-day period, with a vice presidential faceoff on Tuesday and two more scheduled debates between Bush and Kerry.



PRESIDENTIAL contenders Kerry (left) and Bush at the conclusion of their first presidential debate, Sept. 30. REUTERS

Kerry's strong performance in Thursday's debate with Bush on international affairs, combined with weekend polls showing Kerry with a slim advantage over Bush after trailing him for months, have reinvigorated the Democrat's bid for office.

On Tuesday Kerry's running mate, North Carolina Sen. John Edwards, faces Vice President Dick Cheney in a 90-minute debate on the campus of Case Western Reserve University in midwestern city of Cleveland, Ohio.

The charismatic Edwards, a former trial lawyer, will sit across a table from Cheney, a serious, often dour conservative with a quick wit and sharp tongue. A television journalist will moderate the event. *AFP*

Nobel prize season opens with award for medicine

STOCKHOLM—The 2004 Nobel Prize season opens on Monday (today in Manila) with the announcement of the prize for Medicine, kicking off the annual series of coveted awards culminating in the prestigious honors for Literature and for Peace.

Scandinavian capitals Stockholm and Oslo are abuzz with speculation, and a feeling emerged that the Literature prize could go to a woman this year, while efforts to limit nuclear build-up and proliferation may be rewarded by the Peace award.

Last year the Peace prize, the only honor to be bestowed in Oslo and not in Stockholm, went to Iranian human rights lawyer Shirin Ebadi.

There is no clear favorite ahead of this year's Peace announcement, scheduled for Friday, but if those tipping the nuclear sector are correct, then it may be the turn of the International Atomic Energy Commission and its chief, Mohamed ElBaradei.

After playing a vital role in the inspections of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's weapons arsenal and the search for his suspected nuclear program, the IAEA is currently struggling to get Iran to halt controversial uranium enrichment-related activities and to get to the bottom of North Korea's secretive nuclear program.

Women writers, long overlooked by the Swedish Academy, could be well-placed to take home the Literature honors this year, observers said, citing Algeria's Assia Djebar, Joyce Carol Oates of the United States and Dane Inger Christensen as potential winners.

The Academy has honored only nine women since the prize was first handed out more than a century ago. Most recently, it went to Polish poet Wislawa Szymborska in 1996.

The prize will be awarded either this Thursday or the next.

Last year, the honors went to J.M. Coetzee of South Africa.

After Medicine on Monday, the Physics prize will be announced on Tuesday and Chemistry on Wednesday. The Economics prize, awarded by Sweden's central bank, the Riksbank, is scheduled for Oct. 11.

Nobel prizes, founded by Sweden's Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, were first awarded in 1901. *AFP*

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INDONESIAN hostages Rosidah binti Anan, left, and Rafikan binti Aming are seen in this image from Al Jazeera TV footage taken in Jakarta on Oct. 4. An Islamic militant group claiming to have kidnapped two Indonesian women in Iraq demanded the release of a jailed Indonesian cleric, but the cleric refused to be freed in an exchange, saying hostage-taking is not in keeping with Islam. AP

Powerful bomb blasts shake central Baghdad

BAGHDAD—Two bomb blasts shook separate areas of central Baghdad on Monday, killing at least 10 people and wounding 70, while US and Iraqi forces pursued their offensive against rebel strongholds elsewhere in the country.

In the first attack in Baghdad, a car bomb blew up near one of the entrances to the heavily fortified Green Zone, and close to an Iraqi National Guard recruitment post, killing at least 10 people and wounding 70, doctors and witnesses said.

A US military spokesperson said no US troops were wounded in the attack, but had no further information.

A second bomb, about 30 minutes later, shook buildings in the center of the city and sent thick clouds of black smoke pouring into the air above one of several hotels used by foreign contractors and workers.

Witnesses said the blast occurred as a US military convoy was passing down one of Baghdad's major thoroughfares, in front of the Baghdad Hotel, a building used by US government personnel and contractors.

It was not immediately clear if there were any dead or wounded—US troops sealed off the area and helicopters patrolled the skies above. However, a source at Iraq's interior ministry said he feared there were high casualties.

In the first attack, witnesses said a car raced toward an entrance to the Green Zone, home to the Iraqi interim government, but detonated before reaching the gate, exploding amid civilians milling around the recruitment site.

Insurgents regularly attack the Green Zone, a huge US defended complex in the center of Baghdad that houses the US and British embassies as well as other government buildings, usually firing mortars into its confines.

They have also attacked it with car bombs, detonating one shortly after the handover of power to an Iraqi interim government in June, killing at least 10 people.

Another blast in May, at the same entrance that was attacked on Monday, killed the then-head of the Iraqi Governing Council, the US-backed body that helped administer Iraq before the handover of power.

As insurgents attacked in Baghdad, the US military continued operations against rebel strongholds in the country, carrying out another set of air strikes on suspected militant hideouts in Fallujah.

Operations also continued to bring security to Samarra, a city north of Baghdad that US and Iraqi forces overran on Friday to try to wrest it from guerrilla hands.

In a 36-hour blitz, some 3,000 US troops and 2,000 Iraqi soldiers, backed by US fighter planes and artillery, stormed the city, 100 km north of Baghdad, in an effort to take back from an estimated 500 to 1,000 guerrillas.

They said they killed 125 fighters and captured 88 in the operation, which left dozens of buildings destroyed and which locals said also had a heavy toll among civilians. *Reuters*

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54 Years

Yudhoyono new Indonesia president

YUDHOYONO

JAKARTA—Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was declared the runaway winner of Indonesia's presidential election on Monday, capping a rapid rise to power for the former general who has vowed to create jobs and fight terrorism.

The independent election commission said Yudhoyono had won 60.6 percent of Indonesia's historic first direct leadership ballot to incumbent Megawati Sukarnoputri's 39.4 percent.

Commission officials told a news conference the result was valid, and made no mention of threats by Megawati's team to file a complaint to the Constitutional Court over alleged fraud.

In brief remarks earlier to reporters, Yudhoyono did not explicitly declare victory but spoke just after preliminary final numbers had shown the magnitude of his win in the run-off.

"If that is the result, I thank the people of Indonesia and will soon form the next government and formulate a 100-day programme," Yudhoyono said near his home south of Jakarta.

"The government will work seriously to achieve our goals."

Yudhoyono asked the international community to work with the world's most populous Muslim nation. He did not elaborate, but Indonesia is on the frontline in the war on terrorism after some of the deadliest attacks since the Sept. 11, 2001 strikes.

The poll marked a major step forward in Indonesia's democratic transition following a violent and messy six years since the downfall of autocrat Suharto, a former general who ruled with an iron fist for 32 years.

A spokesman said Yudhoyono would make an acceptance speech at 7 p.m.

Jakarta stocks ended 2.5 percent higher at a record close on expectations Yudhoyono would name a strong cabinet.

Yudhoyono, 55, will be sworn in on Oct. 20. He has said his cabinet will start working on that day.

Unofficial counting in the days after the ballot showed Yudhoyono had easily won, but Megawati had said she would not concede defeat until the election commission announcement. She has yet to publicly acknowledge the loss.

A spokesperson for Megawati, Arif Wibowo, said alleged irregularities had affected the vote in several provinces.

"We may go to the Constitutional Court," Wibowo said.

Foreign and local election observers have said there were no major irregularities that should affect the overall result.

According to the results, Yudhoyono beat Megawati by around 25 million votes. More than 116 million people voted.

Yudhoyono has said his cabinet would mostly comprise professionals, unlike previous governments that drew heavily from Indonesia's major political parties, hindering cohesion and sparking division.

On Saturday, he said his ministers would sign accountability contracts, indicating poor performing ministers may not last. *Reuters*

STEAM column rising from the crater of Mount St. Helens, Oct. 1, at the start of a predicted eruption. AP

St. Helens' eruption near, geologists say

SEATTLE, Washington—A tremor shook Mount St. Helens for 25 minutes early Sunday, prompting scientists to warn of an imminent eruption two days after the volcano came back to life.

The US Geological Survey (USGS) said the volcano, which killed 57 people during a major eruption in 1980, was shaken by a "tremor burst" for 25 minutes. Eathquakes are rumbling at a rate of one or two per minute, it added.

Scientists on Saturday saw an increase of fumaroles, a hole from which hot gases and vapors emanate, in St. Helens' lava dome and detected carbon dioxide, the USGS said.

After 18 years on inactivity, St. Helens roared back to life Friday with a giant plume of steam and ash.

"All this suggests that a second eruption is imminent," said USGS spokesperson Catherine Puckett. "It could happen right now while we are talking, in the next few hours or tomorrow."

Friday's eruption brought hundreds of curiosity seekers to the area who were evacuated on Saturday from an 8-km radius around the mountain, including the USGS Johnson Ridge Observatory.

The Federal Aviation Administration on Friday warned aircraft to avoid the area around the volcano.

The USGS has raised its alert to the maximum third level.

Volcano experts have been warning of a possible imminent eruption of Mount St. Helens for several days as seismic activity in the area grew. *AFP*

Rebels attack anew in India's northeast

GUWAHATI, India—Suspected separatist rebels set off a string of fresh bomb blasts in northeastern India on Sunday, bringing the death toll in a weekend of violence to 56.

Six separate attacks in streets and markets across the northeastern state of Assam killed 10 people on Sunday.

They followed a series of bombings and attacks in Assam and neighboring Nagaland on Saturday that killed 46 people.

No one claimed responsibility, but officials blamed the Assam attacks on the outlawed National Democratic Front of Bodoland, which was marking the day it began fighting for a separate homeland for Bodo tribals in 1985.

Police said the attacks in Assam appeared to be unrelated to those in Nagaland. Twenty-six people died in three bomb attacks in Nagaland on Saturday, the deadliest since a ceasefire with the main Naga separatist group began seven years ago.

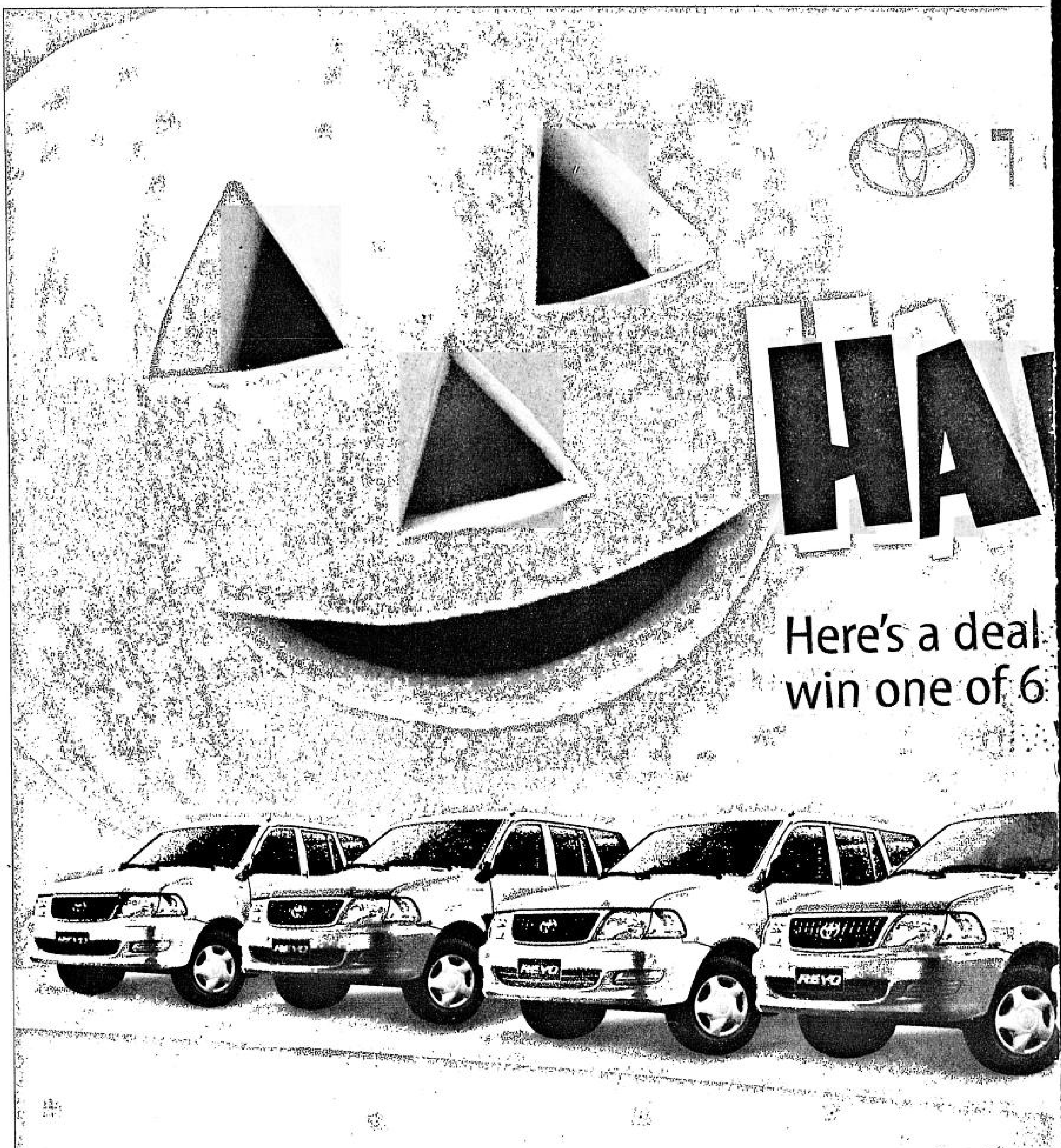
Sunday's bombings targeted markets in remote towns across Assam. Two of the bombs had been strapped to bicycles.

"There were people crying out in pain, there were others walking with blood on their clothes," a resident, Hiren Barua, said by telephone from Sonari, 500 km from Assam's main city Guwahati.

The weekend attacks in the oil and tea producing state of Assam were the worst since separatists launched a rebellion against Indian rule there in 1979.

Along with the Bodos, the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) is also fighting for independence in the state.

The separatists accuse the federal government of plundering the region's natural resources. They also complain that New Delhi has ignored the northeast because of its focus on disputed Kashmir, where it has faced a separatist rebellion since 1989. *Reuters*



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Girl becomes Thailand's 11th bird flu fatality

BANGKOK—An 8-year-old girl has died of bird flu in northern Thailand, becoming the country's 11th confirmed victim of the lethal virus this year, health officials said Monday.

"She fell ill last Thursday and was admitted to hospital Sunday before she died that night," Health Minister Sudarat Keyuraphan told reporters.

The girl, from Phetchabun province, was the third Thai to die during a new wave of outbreaks that started in July.

At least 19 people have also died of bird flu in Vietnam since December last year and millions of birds have died or been culled across Asia.

The girl, who was not named by officials, was taken to hospital with a fever last week after eight of the family's chickens died and was confirmed Sunday as having the lethal H5N1 form of the virus.

The girl lived in a poorly ventilated one-story house and helped pluck chickens after her grandmother slaughtered them for cooking, according to a health ministry statement.

"Friends discouraged her without any success," it said. One thousand chickens in the village were to be culled late Sunday.

Sudarat said chickens in the girl's village, in Chon Daen district about 330 km north of Bangkok, "have been dying since early last month while chickens at the girl's house died around mid-September."

It was not immediately clear how Thai authorities initially learned of or dealt with the poultry deaths.

Last month Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra criticized the health and agriculture ministries for not doing enough to stem the outbreaks, and said local authorities should have announced suspicious poultry deaths more quickly.

Tests and monitoring of the girl's relatives, neighbors, classmates and hospital staff have been undertaken, Sudarat added.

Thai officials last week confirmed its first probable case of human-to-human infection of bird flu following the deaths of a mother and daughter.

Tests are still continuing to try to confirm that the daughter had flu—she was cremated before full tests could be carried out—and to discover if the disease had mutated into a more contagious and lethal form that could trigger a wider health crisis.

A mutated bird flu outbreak was blamed for the deaths of as many as 40 million people worldwide in 1918. Thai health officials said early indications were that the strain had not changed much.

Meanwhile, Thai media reported Monday that laboratory tests confirmed the bird flu virus had been discovered in dogs northeast of Bangkok.

Health officials said they could not verify the reports, although the health minister expressed concern over possible infection of mammals.

"I'm worried about a broader spread of the virus into mammals because theories suggest that if it spreads to mammals it could be more dangerous (for humans)," Sudarat said.

AFP

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TOYOTA

Finance leaders urge vigilance on terror, poverty

WASHINGTON—Finance officials from all over the globe gathered under heavy guard on Sunday to push for a stepped-up fight against terror financing while warning the poor must not be forgotten.

Security has never been tighter at the International Monetary Fund and World Bank meetings, where finance ministers and central bankers from about 180 countries meet twice a year to discuss the the global economy and any threats it faces.

Fences, concrete barricades and massive trucks ringed the IMF and World Bank buildings, which teemed with police and bomb-sniffing dogs. Roads around the buildings, only blocks from the White House, were sealed off to traffic.

Security officers staffed X-ray scanners and checked the identification of every visitor to the building—from finance ministers to reporters. But the weekend went off without incident.

"Terror has reached our door," James Wolfensohn, president of the World Bank, declared to shareholder governments on the last day of the meetings.

"One need only look at the cement barriers surrounding these buildings to understand the big difference of the past year."

Some finance officials suggested the meetings be held outside the United States, which has been on heightened alert since the Sept 11, 2001 attacks.

The US government raised the threat level on Aug. 1 this year, saying it had found evidence that financial targets, including the World Bank and IMF, could be at risk of attacks.

Wolfensohn, whose bank is at the forefront of the poverty fight, said his concern was that heavy spending on security may eat into aid for the poor.

"The danger is that ... we lose sight of the longer-term and equally urgent causes of our insecure world: poverty, frustration, and lack of hope," he said.

In their remarks to the meeting, the finance officials repeatedly called for tougher steps to choke off terror financing, pointing to the link between global security and economic prosperity. *Reuters*

ETA's 'political leader' arrested in French swoop

BORDEAUX, France—Police arrested the suspected political leader of the Basque guerrilla group ETA, detained 20 others, and seized explosives, grenades and other weapons in a series of raids on Sunday, officials said.

Hailed by authorities as a major blow to the outlawed separatist group in France and Spain, police arrested Mikel Albisu Iriarte, alias "Mikel Antza", said by Spanish authorities to have been ETA's political chief since 1993.

He was arrested with his partner, another suspected ETA veteran, Soledad Iparraguirre, alias "Anboto", at Salies de Bearn in southwestern France. Accused of involvement in at least 14 murders, she is the highest-ranking woman in ETA, the Spanish interior ministry said in a statement.

A total of 20 people suspected of links to ETA were detained in France, where dozens of anti-terrorist and local police took part in raids in a search for ETA bases.

Interior Minister Jose Antonio Alonso said more than 1,000 kg of explosives of different types were found along with dozens of sub machine guns, grenades, grenade launchers, detonators and bullets.

"This operation is historic," Alonso told reporters.

"Despite this grave blow (to ETA) ... we continue on maximum alert, and won't let our guard down one single minute."

Spanish police also arrested a truck driver in the central city of Burgos who was suspected of involvement in attacks last week in which bombs were attached to electricity pylons in Spain.

ETA, classed as a terrorist group by the European Union and the United States, has killed more than 800 people since 1968 to press its demand for a Basque state carved out of northern Spain and southwestern France. *Reuters*

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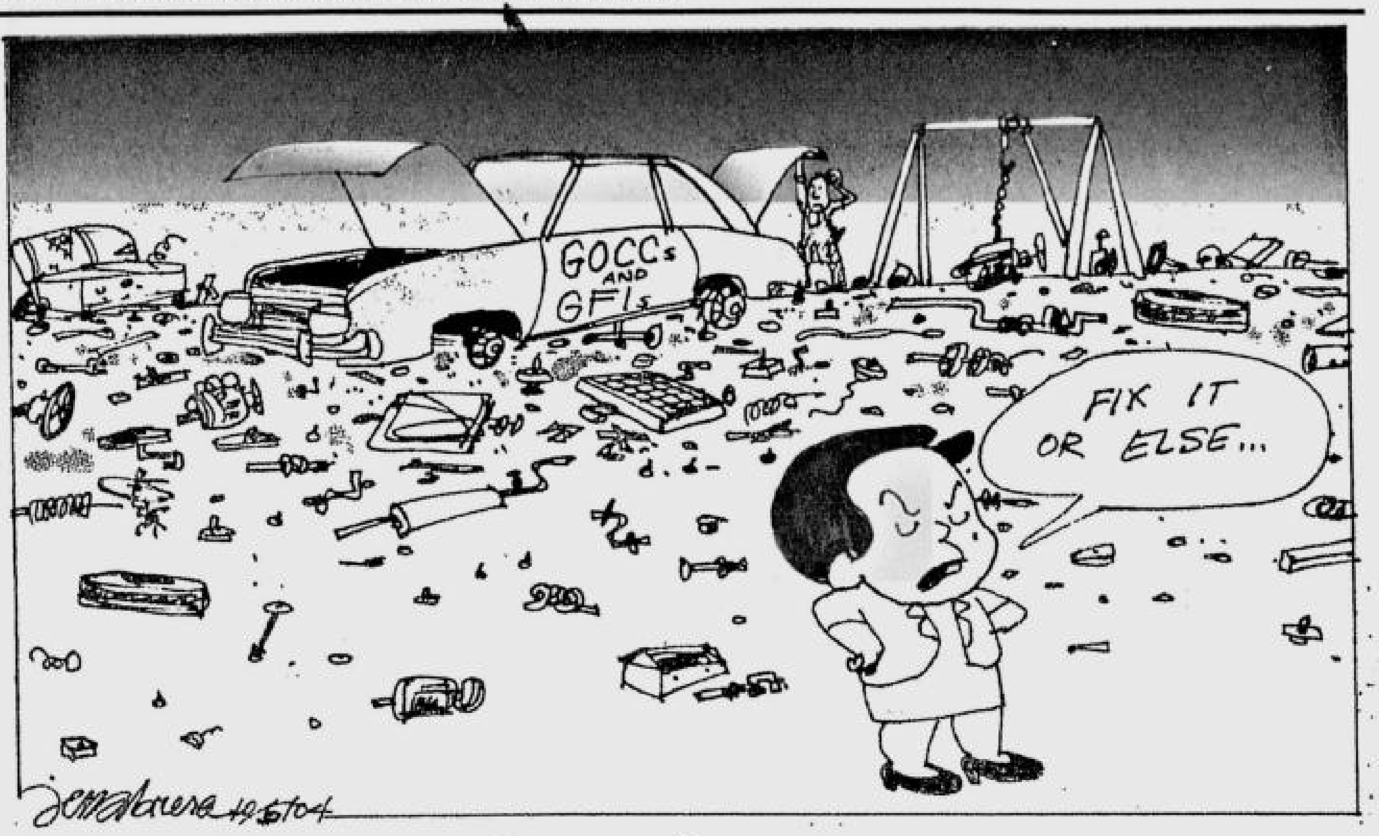

Garcia's revenge

EDITORIAL

WINSTON Garcia, president and general manager of the Government Service Insurance System, has been so very busy answering charges of mismanagement, abuse of authority and graft and corruption, we wonder if he can still get any work done. In the last few weeks, Garcia has been accused of giving himself one of the biggest compensation packages among officials working in government-owned and -controlled corporations, incurring P5 million in cash advances, taking out a P2.1 million loan to buy a Volvo and another loan of P11 million to buy a house, and committing human rights violations by ordering the violent dispersal of militant government workers demanding his ouster.

To all of which Garcia's standard response has been that he did nothing wrong. He has repeatedly said there was nothing illegal about the multimillion-peso compensation he was receiving from the GSIS or the loans he had secured. Maybe—although one cannot be sure whether his mere certification that the P5-million cash advances had been used "in relation to or by reason of (his) position" satisfies government auditing rules. But certainly it was unethical if not immoral for Garcia to get those multimillion-peso loans at a time when government employees were complaining about the difficulty of securing loans from the GSIS—and to satisfy his lavish taste yet.

"I'd rather borrow than steal," Garcia declared in his own defense. "There's nothing irregular with this, because any member can get a housing loan in two or three days if their papers are complete."

That has not been the common experience of ordinary government employees who more often than not have to wait for weeks, even months, to get loans or receive their pensions. If the GSIS Pabahay Executive Committee can routinely process and approve housing loan applications in two days, this is the first time GSIS members and the general public have heard about it. Obviously Garcia got some "special accommodation" a number of times, and if he sees nothing wrong with that, it only demonstrates an insensitivity and an absence of delicadeza which can be detrimental to public service.

But rather than heed the clamor of militant groups and even some sober-minded legislators, like Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., for him to step down, Garcia has opted not just to dig in but to fight back. Last week, he accused Iloilo Rep. Rolex Suplico (one of the House members who wanted Garcia investigated for gross mismanagement of the GSIS funds) of using his position to "coerce" a multinational company to buy land belonging to his wife's family at a "staggering cost of P175 million." Earlier he claimed that one of his other accusers in Congress, Leyte Rep. Eduardo Veloso, acting in behalf of some private companies, had sought to get part of the GSIS' reinsurance business. And also last week, he ordered plunder charges filed against four officials of the GSIS branch office in Tarlac over an alleged P413 billion housing loan scam. He vowed to conduct a purge of GSIS officials involved in various anomalies, saying that syndicates hurting from the reforms he had introduced, as well as a "cabal of insurance brokers," were orchestrating the "smear campaign" against him.

Any of these charges is certainly worse than the blackest mud his accusers have thrown at Garcia. Each of the charges he has made is clearly criminal in nature. The only thing that diminishes their shock value is that they are being made by Garcia when he has his back against the wall. The plunder case even makes him look negligent. If Garcia knew about such wrongdoings for so long, why did he wait until now to denounce them? If his accusers didn't go after him, would he have just kept quiet about the alleged extortion committed by Suplico, or Veloso's attempt at influence-peddling, or the plunder of GSIS funds by officials he suspects of working for his ouster?

While it is obvious that Garcia is moved by his desire for revenge, this does not diminish one bit the gravity of the offenses he has leveled against the two congressmen and GSIS officials. If Garcia has the goods on them, he would be doing the nation a great service if he made sure that they were prosecuted and jailed for these crimes. This is a worthier endeavor than trying to hang on to a job that is becoming too hot for him to handle. If he pursues these cases to the end and wins, even those government employees who want him out of the GSIS should be able to forgive him his excesses.

Coups for rent

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

WILL President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo decisively close down one of this troubled country's newer businesses: "coups for rent"?

Courts are now hearing mutiny cases lodged against 32—out of the original 325 soldiers—who took over Oakwood Hotel, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzales noted. The "Magdalo" rebels, thus, are beyond the President's reach, he said. And amnesty is Congress' prerogative.

Mixed signals earlier wafted from Malacañang on a "deal," following the public apology from Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes VI and other mutineers.

In their mea culpa, the rebels—mostly Philippine Military Academy Class '95 graduates—insisted they were sincere reformers. Democracy then does not grow out of a gun barrel? They'd abide now by the Constitution, in the military, if given a chance.

"Hot money" sloshes in this town. No one, let alone deposed Joseph Estrada, picked up the mutiny tab, the Magdalos claimed. Their "idealism was not for hire."

Reactions were varied. Veteran of failed "God Save The Queen" coups, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, predictably thumbed-up amnesty. Finger your godfather first, a House defense committee member said. Someone bankrolled those polished boots, radios, airline tickets, plus brand-new vans later abandoned. "Who rented this coup?"

"Unless justice is done, this problem will reappear in the future," warned Dr. Carolina Hernandez, University of the Philippines scholar on the military. We've been there before, she recalled. Both the Davide and Feliciano Commissions insist on justice as basis for closure.

Amnesty chatter sent some to re-read "Closer Than Brothers—Manhood at the Philippine Military Academy" (Yale University 1999). This study compares three generations of PMA graduates: Classes '40, '71 and '90. Written by Prof. Alfred McCoy, it asks: Have constitutional values, in soldiers trained on taxpayers money, atrophied?

"In the Philippines, institutions often seem the sum of personal ties," McCoy notes. PMA graduates "translate broad ideological currents into institutional change in an impoverished country where 169 families monopolize power."

Battle and Japanese concentration camps bonded Class '40 graduates. "Their belief in civil supremacy would later withstand the pressures of higher command," the study adds. "They actively blocked coup attempts."

Martial law co-opted Class '71. It became the "mailed fist of the dictatorship." Among its 85 graduates, five tortured, six were murdered. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan and 14 others were neck-deep in coups. "As players in Marcos' script of violence, they gradually broke free from the constraints of military discipline."

Class '90 confronted, in the post-People Power Revolt years, institutions shattered by the Marcos dictatorship. Their formation in PMA was a time of unprecedented ferment.

Some were teenagers when RAM first revolted. When Colonel Honasan attempted his bloodiest coup, Class '90 "preferred to support the Constitution." But its yearbook praised RAM's fight "for the Filipino people." They reecho in the Magdalo criticism of corruption.

"Contrast between Classes '40 and '71 offers insight of the country's past," McCoy writes. But "a comparison of Class '40 and '90 allows us a glimpse into the future." Five classes later, the sought-after peek into the future emerged in Oakwood.

Looking back, McCoy noted that while they were cadets, all of them staged protests: Class '40 over unfair exams; Class '71, staff corruption and Class '90, government hypocrisy.

Similarity can conceal difference. Class '40s strike reinforced their commitment to the chain of command," the book notes. "The abortive protest of '71 later inspired revolt against the same hierarchy."

"The meaning Class '90 draws from these experiences, and the way these lessons (are) challenged by their service as junior officers, will have a lasting influence on them and the armed forces," he asserts.

Recent comment, however, focused on how PMA Class '71 stacked up against Class '40. That's understandable. Graduates of '71 included the failed coup artist Honasan and former presidential candidate Panfilo Lacson.

Yet, Class '71s six coups flopped. "Majority of Filipino officers did not believe in seizing state power," McCoy noted. "A tentative belief in civil supremacy and military professionalism somehow survived the Marcos year." This mixed history impacted on the PMA classes of the '90s.

Oakwood collapsed in 24 hours. Erap's *descamisados* didn't rally to Magdalo's inverted flag and embroidered armbands. Neither did other military men.

President Manuel Quezon was always wary of the military in politics. He established a corps of professional officers. Thus, Quezon denied "control over the nation's arsenals to established political elites, whether nationalist lawyers from UP or corporate executives from Ateneo."

Marcos' uncorked the coup genie. "By his long service to the dictatorship, and his presidency, Ramos gave form to these fears," the book adds.

For now, President Macapagal-Arroyo must end coup-for-rent disruptions. Her hard-pressed administration needs breathing space.

"Long after a president's name is remembered only in fading street signs," the Yale book adds, "an entire cohort of officers will bear the imprint of his or her decisions—and influence the character of the Philippine military and nation," the book warns. That will affect the President's grandchildren too.

* * *

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Cures

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I SYMPATHIZE completely with Minguita Padilla (PDI, 9/29/04) in her crusade to vindicate doctors from the witch hunt being waged against them by some people in media and Congress. Chief of them Korina Sanchez, who seems to have made it her life's work to make doctors pay for the sins of the world, and Serge Osmeña, who has decided to lead the torch-carrying mob laying siege at Frankenstein's castle.

Sanchez has renewed her attacks against doctors in her radio and TV shows, while Osmeña has authored Senate Bill 1720 criminalizing "medical malpractice" and forcing doctors to get "mandatory malpractice insurance."

As Padilla says, in these days, when doctors are leaving the country faster than you can say "penicillin," it is inconceivable why we persecute them in this way. With government cutting down on its health budget ("it now allocates a scandalous 35 centavos per Filipino" for health), with fewer students taking up medicine ("at least 35 medical schools are on the brink of collapse because of a large drop in enrollment"), and with the ranks of doctors in this country so depleted the UP-PGH, "which used to turn away so many applicants for residency (not even able) to fill up half of its available positions today," we may wake up soon to find out there's no one left to give balm to our wounds.

One would imagine, Padilla says, that those who have remained behind—and most of them have done so by choice—would be objects of much adulation. Instead, they have become objects of opprobrium.

Let me be clear about a couple of things from the start.

I do know that medical malpractice happens, and I agree that they may even be rampant. I do know that patients are often at the mercy of hospitals, are often overcharged, and are often given a raw deal, either not getting better or even getting worse. It's not only because each time I listen to AM radio while on the road I get to hear these complaints from the public in various talk shows and commentaries. It's also because I get to hear these complaints directly from friends and relations. Try telling a horror story about doctors and hospitals in a family gathering, and you won't hear the end of it. You'll get a dozen stories along the same lines, each one worse than the last.

My own good friend Rodolfo Salas' son-in-law died in what they reckon to be a case of hospital negligence. The young man choked to death from his vomit in the middle of the night after he was taken in for intestinal pains. A decade or so ago, I wrote several columns on the eye-popping number of deaths in Cebu stemming from doctors taking in more patients than they could handle. These things do happen. And it is alarming that they do.

And I do agree that something ought to be done about it. I agree that it is not enough that doctors just promise to reprimand and punish the guilty. People have every reason to complain and bring their cases to the attention of media when the Philippine Medical Association proves deaf to their entreaty. People have every reason to demand that their cases, which represent a grave injustice, do not go the way of coup plots or mutinies where the perpetrators are given push-ups.

What mechanisms this will take, however, I do not know. I do know enough conscientious doctors to say with confidence that a dialogue between them and the public on this score will not be a dialogue of the deaf. They are as much concerned with the integrity of the profession they love as the public is of the health it cherishes.

What I am against is turning doctors into The Enemy. Which is what such things as criminalizing medical malpractice and forcing doctors to buy malpractice insurance do. They turn doctors into suspects who may be presumed guilty until proven innocent. At the very least of course, what it will do is jack up the cost of doctors and hospitals.

But that is nothing. The best argument against it I heard from a friend, who said it would effectively end medical volunteer work, particularly among the poor in the countryside. Doctors who volunteer thus have to make do with crude instruments and the most adverse conditions to treat patients. Now why would anyone want to do that if all she or he would get from their pains would be an *Atorni* Agaton trying to make a fast buck on an operation gone sour—malpractice being criminal, it can be brought to court by anyone other than the victim or the victim's kin—by making a case of it?

One truly would imagine that it's bad enough that we do not pin medals on those who have decided to stay behind amid the lure of greener pastures in Canada and elsewhere. Though, of course, the exiles are not always guaranteed work as doctors, which is double the pity. One would truly imagine that with Elmer Jacinto, the young man from Basilan who topped the medical board exams, setting a horrendous example by agreeing to work as a caregiver in New York, we would want to give our doctors, full-blown or burgeoning, all the incentives they need to stay. But to make their lives hell instead?

Having survived asthma as a kid and various afflictions as an adult with no small help from doctors, I personally cannot understand Sanchez's and Osmeña's tack. The doctors are right to argue that at least they, who hold the power of life and death over people's bodies, take exams to show they are qualified. Whereas those in media, particularly TV which is ubiquitous, who hold the power of life and death over people's reputations, do not. I have always asked myself that question too, why journalism is not a licensed occupation. Why anyone can feel free to call himself, or herself, a journalist while merely poisoning the air with verbal smog.

But it will take more than doctors to cure that.

Rosales backs up Gonzalez

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

I'M GLAD things are clearing up on the issue of amnesty for the Oakwood mutineers, thanks to Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez who has spelled things out in a forthright manner. Earlier, I lauded the President for stressing that even as she accepted the apology of the mutineers, they still have to go through a court martial. A vague hint of a pardon was also floated, but it was clear that this might come only after conviction. Things got muddled after amnesty was suddenly thrown in. People got the impression that the Palace was headed in this direction, especially since Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz said that Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita had asked him to study the matter. Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye also said on one occasion that amnesty was an option. It was left to Gonzalez to explain that amnesty is "beyond the reach" of Malacañang because it must be extended by an act of Congress.

* * *

The DOJ chief stressed that a bill on amnesty for the rebels has to be filed in Congress and signed into law by President Macapagal-Arroyo. But Gonzalez clearly stated that he is for seeing the court martial through, and I'm glad Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales supports his position. The Manila prelate has correctly warned that going soft on the mutineers could encourage future coup attempts. He opined that had the coup plotters in the Cory administration "stopped with the first attempt," our nation woulld have been far better off today. So much foreign investments were lost in those years because of the coup attempts, Rosales stressed.

* * *

This is the reason the Oakwood mutineers have to go through a court martial. Not only is it the just thing to do, it is also for the education of our people, so they can form a better judgment on the grave act of mutiny. The conflicting opinions expressed by our officials and the way the press have reported them should serve as a lesson: In matters that are so sensitive—such as the grant of amnesty or pardon—it's best for our officials to go into more serious thought instead of throwing about speculations and expressing views off the top of their heads. Why couldn't they just say to the media, "We're studying all the options, and will keep you posted if there's something definite"? Our officials have to realize that their poorly thought-out statements often impact on the perception that this "Strong Republic" is actually weak.

* * *

By the way, the DOJ chief reacted to some lawmen's complaint, aired in this column, about how criminals are able to roam around on bail after prosecutors downgrade the charges against them from murder to homicide. Gonzalez said he had asked the Pasay prosecutor to explain why the charge against the killer of Today's Jose Luis Villanueva was downgraded. He said this tendency to downgrade cases will be stopped during his watch and that, in fact, he had already reversed a downgraded charge against a town mayor.

* * *

Yesterday I spoke of the great tourist potential of Calubian, Leyte, and the island province of Biliran across the strait, with their coconut-fringed beaches, mountains, emerald seas and fresh fish and seafood, such as the scallops which are prized by Chinese restaurants. This part of the Philippines, in fact, could be developed into a great tourist destination, together with the next door town of Leyte, Leyte. American priest Kenneth Hendricks of Cincinnati, Ohio, who has been in the country for the past 30 years and works in the Diocese of Biliran, spoke of the island of Maripipi whose waters are so crystal clear one could see the dirt in one's toenails through them. We visited our friend, former Rep. Gerry Espina, now mayor of Naval, the capital of Biliran, and we were enchanted by the beauty of his town. Approaching it from the strait, we were reminded of lovely Greek islands.

But alas, the roads in and around Calubian and Leyte, Leyte, are still so rough, and there are no hotels there. We were billeted in the only inn called Lotus, run by a Dutch guy named Martin Kramer and his Leyteña wife Ela. The place has a good beach and a fabulous view of the Biliran mountains. On top of that, the husband-and-wife team treats guests to freshly-gathered *tuba*. A reader suggested that pilgrimage tours to the shrine of St. Therese in Calubian could be organized, and that the lack of inns and the bad roads could be part of the penitential rites. But this should be a good reminder to three-term Rep. Eduardo Veloso who almost lost the recent elections on that issue.

* * *

I had a long chat with Calubian's 24-year-old Mayor Hazel "Dayday" Po and 3rd district provincial board member Roel Batan and I learned a lot about their district's situation on the ground. Dayday, who was elected the youngest mayor at age 20 in 2001, said that since the implementation of GMA's austerity program, P22,000 is being cut every month from Calubian's internal revenue allotment. This means the mayor has barely P2 million a month to spread among its 53 barangays and 33,000 residents. Twenty percent of the IRA goes to the economic development fund, i.e., infrastructure; 45 to 55 percent to the town's budgetary requirements; and 25 percent to the barangays and intelligence funds.

The problem is that this 5th class municipality is almost totally dependent on the IRA, since many of the people are poor and many landowners do not pay their taxes. The town's predicament, in fact, reflects the province's, said Batan, who noted that Leyte's budget is derived 95 percent from the IRA and only 5 percent from revenues. This is sad, for Leyte has a vast reserve of geothermal energy in Tongonan, plenty of raw materials and manpower. What is needed are investments, but then, who'd come if the roads are bad?

Change of scenery

HIGH BLOOD

Luis R. Sioson

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. —**Ed.**

MY wife is retiring later this year, which of course, is another way of saying she is turning 60, whether she likes it or not. "Mandatory" as the personnel department would put it. What could be more mandatory than the passing of the years? But for her, retirement is far from mandatory. It's just a change of scenery, a new beginning.

She entered her organization as a secretary, shy and unsure. Thirty-seven years later, she is making a happy exit, a fulfilled, self-confident career officer, still full of life. She does not look her age at all. She knows it and exults in it. When once I looked closely at her hair, I could see no more than four streaks of gray. Maybe, love is really blind.

She still walks fast and talks faster. Her quick staccato steps echo in the marbled halls of her office. When we do the malls, she often leaves me behind. In our evening family prayer, she leaves most of us behind. Brimming over with energy, she is all set to begin a new lifetime before her. She simply cannot imagine herself doing nothing and resting afterwards. In fact, she has fully booked her "retirement."

She's joining a church group of "*manangs*" in the neighborhood whose uniforms are a "*fashionista's*" nightmare: immaculate white dress with long below-the-knee hemline.

She will join the church choir. She was a soprano in her company's glee club. She is still very much a soprano at home, especially when scolding her sons or the maids.

She will go back to playing the organ in church in the early daily morning Mass, as she used to when she was younger.

She will play the piano again after almost 40 years. (Why we had to have two pianos when she only has two hands is beyond me.)

She will take art lessons (painting on glass and bottles). She will start reading some seven books she has lined up for her retirement. (Until now she can't bring herself to finish Frank McCourt's "Angela's Ashes." Too sad, grips her heart, she says.)

She will resume her knitting. (She had knitted sweaters for the family before).

She may take up ballroom dancing again. (She was a member of her company's folk dance group).

She may do *taebo* or *taichi* with the physical fitness group in the neighborhood or at the nearby mall.

She will spend more time with her sons doing Divisoria and "*ilalim ng tulay*" in Quiapo.

She will have the supermarket all to herself on Mondays.

She will enroll (again) in driving school. Her children unanimously agree she will learn driving easily, noting that she already quite convincingly spits out extra expletives at reckless drivers on the road, complete with instant translation—"*Estupido*! Stupid!" She is not, by the way, a Spanish-speaking mestiza. With her behind the wheels, I would have my turn as front seat driver.

She will finish bringing out clothes and shoes from the closets for charity (except her 34-year-old wedding gown).

She will clean up and clear up the library which actually is a storeroom for books and assorted bric-a-bracs, a piano room, a gym and sometimes, a TV room.

She will computerize the inventory of books, cassette and VHS tapes, CDs, DVD and VCD movies kept in the different parts of the house (she has set aside stacks of VCD and DVD movies with happy endings).

She will fix the family photo albums and collate countless photographs accumulated through the years.

She will visit Zeny, her hairdresser, more frequently (once every two months). No manicure, no pedicure, no lipstick, no makeup, no hair rebonding, just her hair in all its natural glory (her face is unblemished by makeup).

She will call up and meet friends she has not seen for a long time (two weeks or less)—officemates she'll be leaving behind who call her "Tita" or "mother," retired "Golden Girls" from her office ("oldies but goodies," they call themselves), her "*amigas de Ayala Alabang*," and classmates from that girls' school on San Marcelino, Malate, well-known for its successful, strong-headed alumnae.

She will accept one of several offers from NGOs which have invited her to do volunteer work for them. She will most probably join an NGO for battered women near our place.

She may work again part-time as accountant.

Lately, she has been bringing home an alarming number of travel brochures and magazines. You see, she is also a tourist. But that's another story.

Luis R. Sioson, 68, is a retired insurance executive.

Mexican soldiers in the Philippines

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

ON OCT. 8, 1565 the galleon, "San Pedro" dropped anchor in Acapulco with Fr. Andres de Urdaneta, who had found a new route to the Philippines from New Spain. The ship, "San Lucas," under Capt. Alonso de Arellano and his pilot Lope Martin, had preceded it, having drifted away from the armada of Miguel Lopez de Legaspi on the way to the Philippines. It arrived on the coast of Mindanao and later, after navigating through the archipelago, returned to Mexico—on a route almost parallel to that of the "San Pedro"—arriving at the port of La Navidad from where it had departed on Aug. 9 of the same year.

Letters from Legaspi and the royal officials were carried by the "San Pedro," asking for the immediate shipment of men and materials needed to consolidate the precarious Spanish foothold in Cebu.

Eventually Mexico became the base for the migratory movement to populate the remote islands, and although most Filipinos today believe that the majority of these migrants were Spanish, it is entirely possible that they were in fact Mexicans. (This may be borne out by the many words in the local language that are Mexican in origin, such as *tiangge, palenque, sacate*).

In response to the request, the Audiencia in Mexico sent a solitary and dilapidated ship, "San Geronimo" under Capt. Pedro Sanchez Pericon and the pilot Lope Martin. It left Acapulco on May 1, 1566 and arrived in Cebu on Oct. 15 of the same year. Conspiracies, mutinies and deaths, beginning with that of the captain, marked the disastrous crossing of this vessel that brought little help to Legaspi. According to the chronicler of the trip, the Audiencia provided only 50 soldiers even if in Acapulco there were more than a hundred sailors.

This meager force was followed by a bigger one. On April 1567, two vessels left Acapulco with 300 men—soldiers and mariners. The expedition included Felipe de Salcedo, nephew of Legaspi. The soldiers consisted of two companies, one under Capt. Artieda, and another under Juan de Aguirre at the orders of Andres de Ibarra. They arrived in Cebu on August 1567.

Three years later, on March 9, 1570, three ships arrived with some 200 passengers among them sailors, soldiers, women and married men on board. Capt. Juan de la Isla left Acapulco to arrive in Panay where Legaspi was based that year. The viceroy Martin Enriquez responded to the royal orders to supply the Philippines with all the help that they demanded. In 1573, he wrote to the monarch stating that he had sent one or two ships with men and munitions every year since 1569. Due to the lack of funds and the rigors of the climate in the islands, succeeding shipments tended to be less rather than more.

However, almost 200 men were sent per trip in those first years. Colonization demanded the presence of soldiers to affirm, protect and secure the possession of the archipelago. Their recruitment became the main preoccupation of the authorities in Mexico each time they organized the sending of ships to the islands.

This task of recruitment has left an interesting document relative to the soldiers sent to the Philippines in the trip of Dr. Francisco de Sande, councilor of the Audiencia in Mexico, who was designated governor of the islands after Guido de Lavezarez, successor to Legaspi. The document furnishes valuable details regarding the heterogeneous composition of a group of soldiers toward the end of the 16th century. With a few exceptions, the document (certified on March 25, 1575) provided such information as the name of the soldiers and of their parents, their places of origin, age and physical details of each individual, like scars, moles, defects, and height.

By order of the viceroy, the one in charge of the recruitment was Sergeant Major Juan de Morones, member of the Legaspi expedition who had been sent back to Mexico after he was accused of "certain crimes" that the viceroy didn't consider too grave. The recruitment went on from Oct. 16, 1574 to March 10, 1575, a total of 146 days. Every day, the trip was announced to the sound of a drum beat by Hernando Montoya and of the piccolo played by Felipe Martin, a native of the barrio of San Sebastian in Manila. Montoya was paid P91, two *tomines* or five *reales* daily and Martin P19 or P4 daily, although neither went on any of voyages.

In one expedition, there were 178 soldiers who left on two ships—"San Juan" and "Santiago." After cruising through calm waters for 72 days, the expedition arrived in Isla de los Ladrones. It stayed a day and a half to gather water and replenish their foodstuff, after which it continued their journey to the Philippines. Off Cabo del Espiritu Santo in the island of Tendaya (Samar), the expedition met with strong southeasterly winds which lasted until it reached Manila.

One of the passengers was a son who hoped to be reunited with his parents in Manila. The parents had left ahead on a previous voyage. A curious characteristic of these group of soldiers was that the majority of them had physical defects, mostly scars; there was one who was slightly cross-eyed, another had a cataract and a third was walleyed. What we will never know for certain is how many of them settled and intermarried with the natives, and who among them were the soldiers who established Mexico, Pampanga?

(*Data from Luis Muro, Phil. Historical Review, 1972.*)

Coping with terror

YOUNG BLOOD

Tetchie Aquino

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I HAD just finished eating my lunch at school when I got a glance at the headline of the Philippine Daily Inquirer that day. It was about a hostage crisis in Russia that had gone from bad to worse, ending up in a series of explosions that left more or less 300 people dead—more than half of them schoolchildren. My entire being shivered and I nearly threw up. All of a sudden I had a strong urge to fall down on my knees and cry. For the victims. Most especially, for the children.

What was it about the incident that had me on the verge of tears the rest of the day? The world had seen through many terrorist crimes. Inevitably, 9/11 immediately crossed my mind. However, the recent hostage-taking in Russia was to me far worse. In the 9/11 attack, the victims never really knew what hit them. One minute they were laughing, working, studying, playing, going about their usual business, then...wham! They were at least spared the extended torture of hunger, thirst and fear of impending death.

Unlike the Russian hostages. The school children, the teachers, the parents who brought them to school. They were all taken to the gymnasium and, for days, were not allowed any food or water. It came to a point where the children had to piss into their school shoes just to have something to drink. For food, they had to eat the flowers they had brought to school for their teachers. All the while they were crying in pain, in hunger and thirst, and just plain scared the way children should NEVER be allowed to feel.

A song goes thus, "in the eyes of a child, there is joy, there is laughter, there is hope, there is trust, a chance to shape the future..." In the eyes of those Russian children, there could only have been questions as they looked at the adults, the parents, the teachers... even the terrorists and hostage-takers. "Why are you doing this to us? Aren't you supposed to take care of us? Didn't God—whether he be Allah, Yahweh or Jehovah—give you the responsibility to take care of us?"

I hope to God that the teachers who were with the children during that time had the strength of character and the kindness to shield the children from the extreme cruelty that had assaulted them that day. I hope to God they tried at least to take the minds of the children away from the thought of death that awaited them. Especially after the bombs had been activated, and it was only a matter of time, minutes, seconds, before they exploded. I hope to God that the teachers had engaged the children in a game or a story-telling session. I hope to God that the children were laughing and unaware when the bombs finally went off, and darkness enveloped them. I hope to God that death claimed them all swiftly and painlessly.

Questions, and thoughts, fill my mind. How do I cope with this? How does humanity cope with this? Do we go on with our lives studying, teaching, hurting, loving...living? I believe so, yes. We go on with our lives, aware of our responsibilities to effect change in the world, now or in the future, as a fitting tribute to those who died in that Russian tragedy.

Make a difference.

Tetchie Aquino, 22, is a college teacher at the Ateneo de Davao University.

Lost and found

Faith Raagas

WHEN I was six years old, I dreamt of being a princess. I saw myself dancing in a puffy dress, sleeping in a big, canopied bed, meeting my handsome prince and being carried into the woods on his white stallion.

When I was 10, I dreamt of being 16 and a member of the cheerleading squad whose name reverberated through out the school halls and having my cute boyfriend pick me up in school in his metallic blue Porsche.

At the age of 13, I dreamt of being written about in a newspaper because of something wonderful that I accomplished.

My younger years were spent day dreaming, and I felt very excited about growing up because I wanted to see my dreams unfold. But after years of dreaming, I am anything but the girl I dreamed I would be.

But life is really all about perspective. I did not live my dreams, but I still got them albeit in different versions. All girls are princesses in their own right, aren't they? While I couldn't get into the cheerleading squad, I focused my energies on the high school student council, where I became the "cheerleader" for school projects and other activities during general assemblies. I eventually forgot the cute boyfriend because I was surrounded by fantastic girl friends and the funniest boy friends. No writer has written about me, but I write down my feelings, my opinions and my reflections on life in my on-line journal.

Many things happened while I dreamt. I was blessed to have traveled places that expanded my horizon. I was given an education that constantly pushed me to produce nothing but my best. I joined a school immersion that exposed me to the real life and helped me discover my life's passion—exploring and saving our environment—which led me to Haribon, an environmental organization. I became active in the student council, which gave me the opportunity to meet different people with different perspectives, many of whom influenced my beliefs. And all through these years, I had my mom and my brother to cheer me on.

There was more life, and more to life, than the life I dreamt of. I guess I have outgrown my dreams, or, as Jack Gallo put it, I got lost on the way to my dreams and found a better one.

Now I dream of becoming a spokesperson for a huge environmental organization. I dream of visiting our national parks, diving in its richest seas, and capturing many of these moments on camera. I dream of having a job that will take me to places that are exotic and historic, where I can see nature at its best. And I dream of spending my later years on a private island in Palawan.

But so many other things will happen while I dream.

Faith Raagas, 18, is a freshman at the Ateneo de Manila University, taking up management engineering.

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NFA must stay

DAYS ago, top officials of the executive and the legislative departments were one in saying that the National Food Authority must go. In addition, HB 273 was filed in Congress to abolish the rice stabilization functions of the NFA as well as to remove the quantitative restriction on rice imports, paving the way for the privatization of rice importation. This bill is similar to HB 3339 and SB 1912, both of which were junked in the 12th Congress.

The proponents of NFA's privatization are Sen. Jun Magsaysay, chair of the Senate committee on agriculture, and Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin. Their reason: NFA lost heavily last year. These supposed "losses," which are actually the social cost that government has to bear to ensure stable grains price and supply, pales in comparison to the P229.4 billion foregone revenues of the government last year (PDI, 8/27/04) due to the tax breaks and duty exemptions granted to big business.

A closer look at the NFA losses would be very revealing. For three decades, the NFA enjoyed duty-free importations as provided for by its charter. In 2002, the government started charging a 50-percent tariff on NFA's importations which were needed to maintain the country's rice security stock. For that same year, the NFA paid the staggering amounts of around P5 billion, and last year, P7 billion in import duties and taxes. Without the necessary funds, NFA had to resort to commercial bank borrowings with high interest rates to settle these tariff charges. A ridiculous situation where the government charged itself for an interest bearing loan guaranteed by the same government. Also, there was the binge of borrowings the NFA had to resort to because of the yearly "10-month" delay in the remittance by the Department of Budget and Management of the government's subsidy to its rice price stabilization mandate. These borrowings explain the astronomic rise in NFA's trading losses.

Lately, matters of national survival and development were conveniently sidelined because of the unusual preoccupation of the government, in the midst of this fiscal crisis, to ensure a substantial allocation for debt servicing. One of these is NFA's present corporate setup. This structure has been proven effective in averting national rice crises, in deterring the profiteering tendencies of the private sector, and in maintaining an affordable price of rice in all corners of the archipelago.

Yes, the NFA must stay, or there could be social unrest if our people, 70 percent of whom are poor, are unduly deprived of access to affordable, good quality rice. Yes, there is a steep price to pay in ensuring food security for our people. And, yes, it entails a very high cost, but the alternative is a social volcano exploding and causing irreparable damage.

—ROMAN SANCHEZ,
national president,
National Food Authority Employees Association (NFA-EA) Courage,
101 Matimyas Building,
E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City.

DepEd officials should revisit 'Asia'

WHEN Raul Roco tried to rid the Department of Education of dirt, it got rid of him—he was methodically ousted. True to its character, this same DepEd now readily dismisses (PDI, 9/24/04) as baseless and maliciously intended Antonio Calipjo Go's claim that a prescribed history textbook for both public and private high schools is "riddled with factual errors."

Before DepEd officials are allowed to come up with statements regarding a matter where they stand liable, an independent review committee must first be formed to evaluate it and make proper recommendations.

What prompts a man like Go, an educator himself, to claim the book contains errors if it was indeed accurately written? Tens of thousands of printed copies of this book are in our schools today. The committee needs only to secure a copy and it can either justify Go or throw him into prison.

Dr. Teofista Vivar and her co-authors labeled Go's assertion as ill-motivated, dismissing the errors as "manufactured and fabricated." How could that be? They were the ones who wrote the book. She also stated that she has never received a single complaint. Was she expecting one?

"Asya: Noon, Ngayon at sa Hinaharap," the point of controversy, literally translates into "Asia: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow." Any aspiring writer would not approve of this for a title.

In "Kasaysayan ng Daigdig" Vivar and her team stated that Armenian was the native language spoken by Jesus Christ. We know, of course, that it was Aramaic. Similarly, this same textbook, intended for classroom instruction, was so poorly written, littered with grammatical and syntax errors. Lacking cohesion in its presentation, readers can easily trace direct translation from English sources.

Through our taxes, we are the ones paying for these textbooks. They should not be used to undermine the quality of training the state provides. We should not allow distorted knowledge to infuse the minds of our future leaders.

Done with escort girls, this should take center stage at the Senate.

—IKE P. SARMIENTO,
Batangas Street, Makati City

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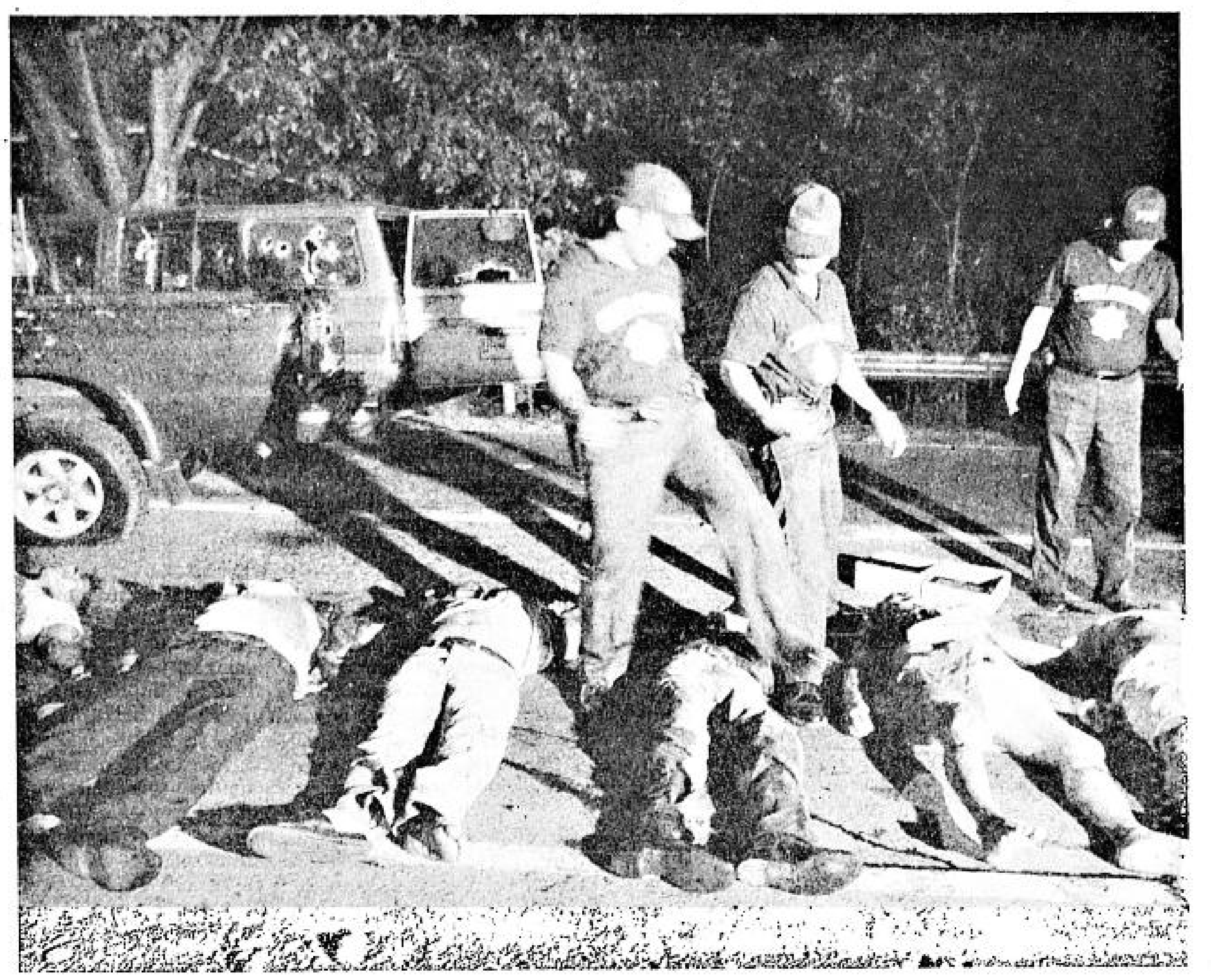

Criminals or salvage victims?

THE INQUIRER carried on the front page of its Sept. 29 issue a picture showing six dead bodies lined along Sumulong Highway in Antipolo City. If these victims are criminals, as the police claimed, well and good. If not, then the police responsible for their deaths must be made to answer.

Are they really the wanted, notorious robbery and kidnap-for-ransom gang, Jaso-Jaso Group? Television accounts refer to them as the notorious Ilonggo Gang. They were killed on the night of Sept. 27 in what has been claimed as a shootout where the victims fired first, wounding a policeman.

If a picture paints a thousand words, there must have been an overkill—what with a Ford Ranger pickup peppered with bullets, front, side and rear.

Nothing indicates there was an exchange of fire. What is quite strange is that the pursuing lawmen are said to have been on board an FX when they gave chase. Were they not riding in an official PNP mobile patrol car? There are no clear accounts or any TV footage showing what firearms or explosives the victims had with them.

One of the victims is said to be a businessman and is known in Marikina as someone unlikely to engage in any criminal activity. So was it really a shootout or a classic case of salvaging or summary execution?

By police accounts, these alleged criminals were supposed to rob a bank in Cubao but were preempted. The group called off its plan but apparently, the police tailed them up to Padi's Point where the said encounter or shootout took place.

Who can tell with certainty on whether there had been indeed a shootout? Dead men tell no tales and media reports are, as always, incomplete. The firearms used by the alleged robbers, if any, were not shown nor reported nor accounted for. At the very least, were the victims in the actual act of committing a bank robbery when they were killed?

Padi's Point, where they were shot and killed, is an eatery or within the vicinity of a row of restaurants frequented by the moneyed class. Were all six victims fired upon in the blue Ford Ranger pickup? If there was an exchange of fire, were there no other persons hit in the crossfire considering that Sumulong Highway is a busy national road?

What exactly happened on the night of Sept. 27?

—PRIMER C. PAGUNURAN,
UP Diliman, Quezon City

Bring all tax credit cheats to justice

THE SPECIAL Presidential Task Force 156 disbands on Oct. 7. But that should not exculpate the task force officials who collaborated with the scam perpetrators. They should not be allowed to heave a sigh of relief.

Many people continue to hope for the recovery of the billions lost in the tax credit certificates scam, especially at this time when our nation is reeling in a fiscal crisis. The government agencies which are tasked to run after the culprits, the Office of the Ombudsman, in particular, should exert every effort to make their hopes come true and send all the cheats and their coddlers to jail.

—GERRY S. MATEO,
gmate0118@pacific.net.ph

Napocor proves gov't, business don't mix

MOST of us know that the National Power Corp. is one of the major reasons why the government has incurred a huge budget deficit. We can only look at the figures and marvel at Napocor's awesome debts—accounting for a huge chunk of the deficit.

Some parties have grabbed the opportunity to use the Napocor mess as a springboard for their argument that the privatization of the energy industry is "doomed to fail." An Ibon report even went so far as to warn that turning the industry over to private interests "would result in onerous energy rates."

Why place the blame for the financial mess that is Napocor at the doorstep of the private sector? In the first place, Napocor is still a wholly government-owned and -controlled corporation. It was government that reduced the utility to a bargaining chip, its rates deliberately suppressed and kept low as a ploy to please the masses. When Napocor started hemorrhaging, it was government that kept it afloat through loans and more loans, which partly explains the huge deficit and the financial crisis the country is facing today.

And they say privatization will kill our industries? In the case of Napocor, privatization would no doubt be the best thing that could happen to it. The utility, in fact, remains the most convincing argument of government's inefficiency in running a business. Government and business simply don't mix!

—MICHELE SAWYER,
1809 Leveriza St., Pasay City

Dear Readers, Text us your comments, suggestions and views on today's news or how it was delivered. Tell us about the news you are interested in and the things you want improved in your favorite newspaper. Text INQUIRER <section keyword> name/city/message and send to 283 (Smart) or 2207 (Globe). The section keywords are indicated in the logo of each section.

Are you in favor of giving amnesty to the Oakwood mutineers? Why or why not?

there shud be no mercy to mutineers. if gloria givs dem amnesty, der wud be more coups! i-punish talaga sila.
—oliver allen f. galupo, *cagayan de oro city*

NO. Oakwood mutineers deserve 2 be punished 4 their crime against the state.
—Leon Asuncion, *San Juan*

Punish them first! teach them a lesson how 2 be good soldier! if found guilty, let them suffer.
—Ronnie P. Beltran, *Mandaluyong City*

No! dey r obviously only choosing d easy way out! They either say sorry or they rot in jail. They knew what dey were doing then, let them suffer d consequence unless they reveal d real mastermind.
—RICHMOND UY, *QUEZON CITY*

no, d justice system shud b allowed 2 take its course. d mutineers shud b tried.

Amnesty?
yes 2 justice!

—carmencita mindo, *sibulan, negros oriental*

No, such act s traitor in d country, d mutineers should face trials
—Leon S. Tabirara, *Cabuyao, Laguna*

No! let's put a stop 2 all dis charade. Let justice reign n spare d country 4 another misadventurism
—Danilo A. Andrey, *Quezon City*

message Yes, because d mutineers were only fighting for legitimate reforms which has fallen on deaf ears.
—gerry singson, *vigan city*

Oakwood mutineers shud not b given amnesty. altho d mutiny was bloodless, deir grievances shud be addressd by d proper authorities.
—pia oliveros, *alabat, quezon*

No, bcoz they triggered d peaceful state of metro manila & must not b tolerated 2 avoid d occurrence of d same event.
—Liziel Ranalan, *Davao City*

no, they must first answer d consequences of der crime.
—joe baguidudol, *san Fernando*

No, because they have done a lot of harm to the democracy & Filipinos.
—jun abraham, *antipolo*

no, that would be 2 light 4 dem. if some pipol get jailed 4 attempted murder, den dey should also b jailed 4 attempted coup.
—Darlene Sumugat, *Digos city*

no! Granting amnesty will be a bad precedent.
—alfredo r torres, *davao city*

no! rebellion is punishable according to the bible 1st rebellion happened in heaven and lucifer was punished by God. No. everyone can do a rebellion act and expecting to be forgiven—that's hell!
—alfonso tolosa, *bacoor, cavite*

No amnesty 4 d Oakwood mutineers coz dey shud b punished 4 their misdeeds.
—Susana Co, *Quezon City*

no, because d court has not decided yet that they r guilty.
—rolando p, *sinajon, digos city*

i am not in favor of amnesty for the mutineers, for mercy will not satisfy the demands of justice.
—Dr. Genesis Centeno, *baguio city*

No coz it will be a bad precedent to some people who would attempt to overthrow d govt. Let them suffer the consequences.
—JOFREY DE LA CRUZ, *Manila*

Yes, but only if all criminals in this country who just apologize will also b given amnesty.
—CATHY UY, *Q.C.*

NO, dapat cla parusahan 2 d full extent of d law, para wag pamarisan. A traitor is always a traitor, wala ng ipagbabago yan.
—Arvin Bernardino, *Q.C.*

no amnesty! Politicians hav no say in diss matter. Let DOJ do their work. Let mutineers suffer full consequences of their actions.
—grace guiua, *san jose*

NO WAY TO AMNESTY! Have we not learned anything from d past errors? granting them amnesty would invite next coup.
—Bernie Tangunan, *Cubao*

What is your reaction to the plan of the government to raise taxes on cigarettes and alcohol/beer (e.g. P1 to P2 pesos per cigarette pack), to help reduce our fiscal deficit?

Kahit triplihin nyo pa, ok lang para wala ng KRIMEN ng dahil sa mga LASINGGONG YAN! Occasional drinking nalang tayo, SOSYAL pa.
—Chiva, *Iloilo*

The govt shud even tax higher than P2 (at least P5) to help generate more revenue and be a stronger deterrent 4 smokers.
—Edwin Nepunan, *Mandaluyong*

Right move, Wrong reason. Raise taxes 2 Discourage VICES N ADDICTION. Debt payment SHUD ONLY B secondary. Promote health. Look @ Singapore.
—IRENE TING, *QC*

Hope dis wil minimize smokers. Less smokers, less lung diseases, less cost 4 gov't hospitals lyk Quezon Institute, additional savings.
—Benito Sanvictores Jr., *Cainta, Rizal*

Ok yun! Kc kung di pa nila nararamdaman pagkabutas ng kanilang baga, at least ngayon ramdam nila pagkabutas ng kanilang bulsa!
—Ma. Katherine Napa, *Parañaque*

ok lang ang "sin taxes"; at least mababawasan ang nagbibisyo, kikita pa tayo
—winifredo tiangco, *Q.C.*

Long overdue. It also discourages pipol from spending der hard-earned money for health hazards such as these. I suggest doblehin na.
—Raul Pamintuan, *bacoor*

Ok lang itaas ang taxes bec these are not essential commodities n dis will help lower d cases of smoke n liquor-related diseases. Good 4 d air, too.
—edward lim, *manila*

lyk treating cancer wid alcOhL. fiscal crisis is result of dEcAdEs of pro-imperialist, anti-people policies. wat we need is a tOtaly new social system.
—eli Garcia, *dagupan*

Tama yan. Alma lagi pinoy sa new taxes pero pag pasarap sa buhay na alang kwenta, di sila hinayang. Pati motels n sauna na rin kaya?
—Raul Pamintuan, *bacoor*

taxes on cig & alcohol? Very wise decision. We even buy these products jus 2 burn & urinate later. it will not matter much 2 them.
—dennis liang, *iloilo*

dapat talaga taasan ang tax ng cigarilyo para mabawasan din ang smokers kaya lang baka mauwi lang sa wala dahil sa mga ganid sa govt sa pera.
—Bernard favilinia, *cavite*

it wud create a low output of sales & more tax evaders. we have had enuf taxes, wher did all d collected revenues go?
—paul ganaban, *bacolod*

Raising taxes on sin products not only reduces d fiscal deficit but also discourages pipol from using cigarettes & alcohol which do not promote health.
—limuel abrogena, *isabela*

Dapat lang dagdagan ang tax kc mga bisyo un at hindi naman BASIC NEEDS. Ibig sabihin may pera ang bumibili nun.
—Benjie Garcia, *Munoz Science City*

makakabuti ang planong ito ng gobyerno. Di lang ekonomiya ng bansa ang paunti-unting maisasalba, kundi pati narin ang kalusugan ng mga mamamayan.
—pia oliveros, *alabat, quezon*

It is quite GOOD 2 Be ABLe 4D Filipinos 2 Lessen DER VICES & Be MoRE HEALTHY, SaVE DeiR MONEY 2 Buy onli Necessities.
—ROSALINA DAVID, *QC*

Good! Excellent! A round of applause to the government.
—Joel Quintela, *Tagum City*

NFA must stay

DAYS ago, top officials of the executive and the legislative departments were one in saying that the National Food Authority must go. In addition, HB 273 was filed in Congress to abolish the rice stabilization functions of the NFA as well as to remove the quantitative restriction on rice imports, paving the way for the privatization of rice importation. This bill is similar to HB 3339 and SB 1912, both of which were junked in the 12th Congress.

The proponents of NFA's privatization are Sen. Jun Magsaysay, chair of the Senate committee on agriculture, and Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin. Their reason: NFA lost heavily last year. These supposed "losses," which are actually the social cost that government has to bear to ensure stable grains price and supply, pales in comparison to the P229.4 billion foregone revenues of the government last year (PDI, 8/27/04) due to the tax breaks and duty exemptions granted to big business.

A closer look at the NFA losses would be very revealing. For three decades, the NFA enjoyed duty-free importations as provided for by its charter. In 2002, the government started charging a 50-percent tariff on NFA's importations which were needed to maintain the country's rice security stock. For that same year, the NFA paid the staggering amounts of around P5 billion, and last year, P7 billion in import duties and taxes. Without the necessary funds, NFA had to resort to commercial bank borrowings with high interest rates to settle these tariff charges. A ridiculous situation where the government charged itself for an interest bearing loan guaranteed by the same government. Also, there was the binge of borrowings the NFA had to resort to because of the yearly "10-month" delay in the remittance by the Department of Budget and Management of the government's subsidy to its rice price stabilization mandate. These borrowings explain the astronomic rise in NFA's trading losses.

Lately, matters of national survival and development were conveniently sidelined because of the unusual preoccupation of the government, in the midst of this fiscal crisis, to ensure a substantial allocation for debt servicing. One of these is NFA's present corporate setup. This structure has been proven effective in averting national rice crises, in deterring the profiteering tendencies of the private sector, and in maintaining an affordable price of rice in all corners of the archipelago.

Yes, the NFA must stay, or there could be social unrest if our people, 70 percent of whom are poor, are unduly deprived of access to affordable, good quality rice. Yes, there is a steep price to pay in ensuring food security for our people. And, yes, it entails a very high cost, but the alternative is a social volcano exploding and causing irreparable damage.

—ROMAN SANCHEZ,
national president,
National Food Authority Employees
Association (NFA-EA) Courage,
101 Matimyas Building,
E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City.

DepEd officials should revisit 'Asia'

WHEN Raul Roco tried to rid the Department of Education of dirt, it got rid of him—he was methodically ousted. True to its character, this same DepEd now readily dismisses (PDI, 9/24/04) as baseless and maliciously intended Antonio Calipjo Go's claim that a prescribed history textbook for both public and private high schools is "riddled with factual errors."

Before DepEd officials are allowed to come up with statements regarding a matter where they stand liable, an independent review committee must first be formed to evaluate it and make proper recommendations.

What prompts a man like Go, an educator himself, to claim the book contains errors if it was indeed accurately written? Tens of thousands of printed copies of this book are in our schools today. The committee needs only to secure a copy and it can either justify Go or throw him into prison.

Dr. Teofista Vivar and her co-authors labeled Go's assertion as ill-motivated, dismissing the errors as "manufactured and fabricated." How could that be? They were the ones who wrote the book. She also stated that she has never received a single complaint. Was she expecting one?

"Asya: Noon, Ngayon at sa Hinaharap," the point of controversy, literally translates into "Asia: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow." Any aspiring writer would not approve of this for a title.

In "Kasaysayan ng Daigdig" Vivar and her team stated that Armenian was the native language spoken by Jesus Christ. We know, of course, that it was Aramaic. Similarly, this same textbook, intended for classroom instruction, was so poorly written, littered with grammatical and syntax errors. Lacking cohesion in its presentation, readers can easily trace direct translation from English sources.

Through our taxes, we are the ones paying for these textbooks. They should not be used to undermine the quality of training the state provides. We should not allow distorted knowledge to infuse the minds of our future leaders.

Done with escort girls, this should take center stage at the Senate.

—IKE P. SARMIENTO,
Batangas Street, Makati City

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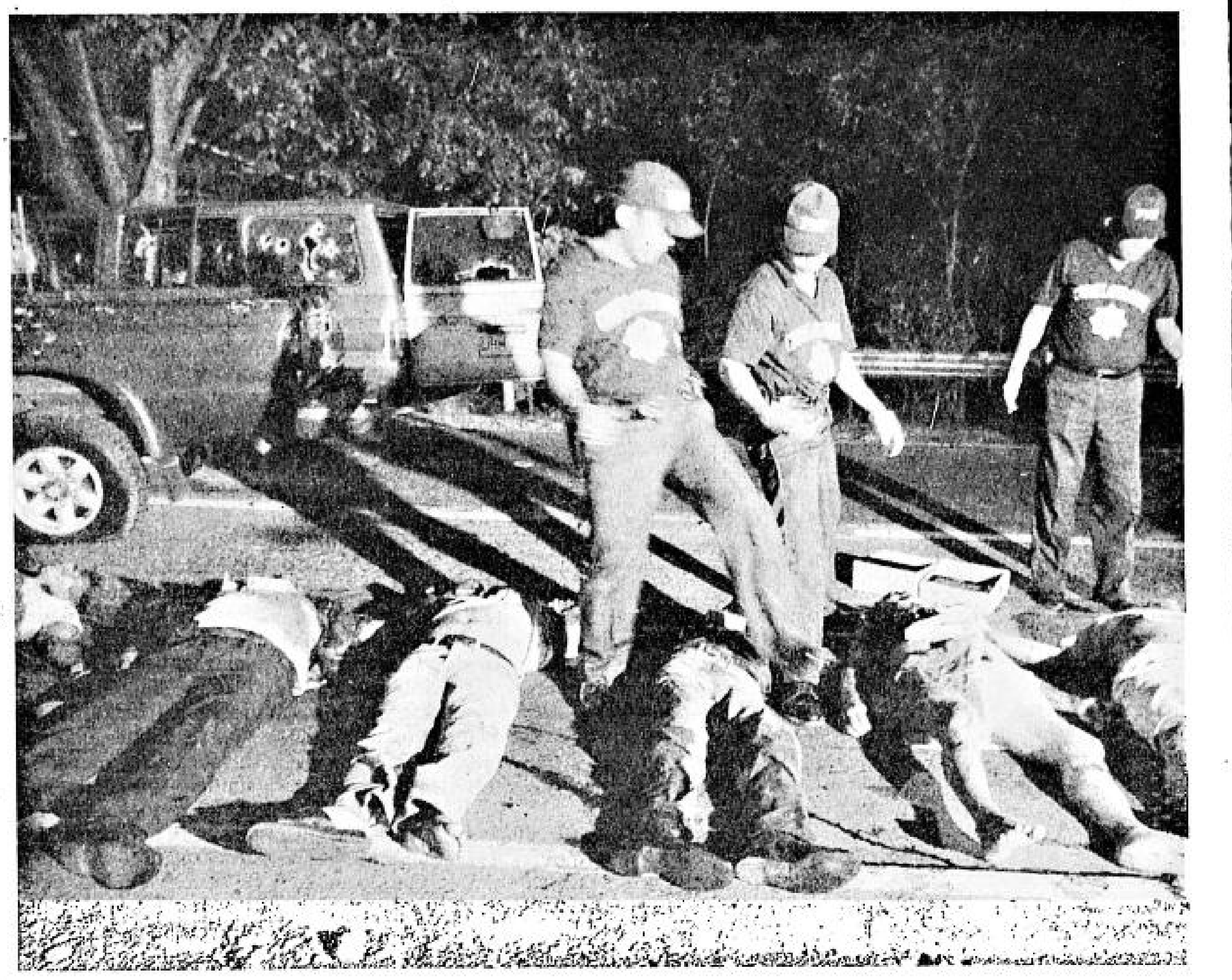


Criminals or salvage victims?

THE INQUIRER carried on the front page of its Sept. 29 issue a picture showing six dead bodies lined along Sumulong Highway in Antipolo City. If these victims are criminals, as the police claimed, well and good. If not, then the police responsible for their deaths must be made to answer.

Are they really the wanted, notorious robbery and kidnap-for-ransom gang, Jaso-Jaso Group? Television accounts refer to them as the notorious Ilonggo Gang. They were killed on the night of Sept. 27 in what has been claimed as a shootout where the victims fired first, wounding a policeman.

If a picture paints a thousand words, there must have been an overkill—what with a Ford Ranger pickup peppered with bullets, front, side and rear.

Nothing indicates there was an exchange of fire. What is quite strange is that the pursuing lawmen are said to have been on board an FX when they gave chase. Were they not riding in an official PNP mobile patrol car? There are no clear accounts or any TV footage showing what firearms or explosives the victims had with them.

One of the victims is said to be a businessman and is known in Marikina as someone unlikely to engage in any criminal activity. So was it really a shootout or a classic case of salvaging or summary execution?

By police accounts, these alleged criminals were supposed to rob a bank in Cubao but were preempted. The group called off its plan but apparently, the police tailed them up to Padi's Point where the said encounter or shootout took place.

Who can tell with certainty on whether there had been indeed a shootout? Dead men tell no tales and media reports are, as always, incomplete. The firearms used by the alleged robbers, if any, were not shown nor reported nor accounted for. At the very least, were the victims in the actual act of committing a bank robbery when they were killed?

Padi's Point, where they were shot and killed, is an eatery or within the vicinity of a row of restaurants frequented by the moneyed class. Were all six victims fired upon in the blue Ford Ranger pickup? If there was an exchange of fire, were there no other persons hit in the crossfire considering that Sumulong Highway is a busy national road?

What exactly happened on the night of Sept. 27?

—PRIMER C. PAGUNURAN,
UP Diliman, Quezon City

Bring all tax credit cheats to justice

THE SPECIAL Presidential Task Force 156 disbands on Oct. 7. But that should not exculpate the task force officials who collaborated with the scam perpetrators. They should not be allowed to heave a sigh of relief.

Many people continue to hope for the recovery of the billions lost in the tax credit certificates scam, especially at this time when our nation is reeling in a fiscal crisis. The government agencies which are tasked to run after the culprits, the Office of the Ombudsman, in particular, should exert every effort to make their hopes come true and send all the cheats and their coddlers to jail.

—GERRY S. MATEO,
gmate0118@pacific.net.ph

Napocor proves gov't, business don't mix

MOST of us know that the National Power Corp. is one of the major reasons why the government has incurred a huge budget deficit. We can only look at the figures and marvel at Napocor's awesome debts—accounting for a huge chunk of the deficit.

Some parties have grabbed the opportunity to use the Napocor mess as a springboard for their argument that the privatization of the energy industry is "doomed to fail." An Ibon report even went so far as to warn that turning the industry over to private interests "would result in onerous energy rates."

Why place the blame for the financial mess that is Napocor at the doorstep of the private sector? In the first place, Napocor is still a wholly government-owned and -controlled corporation. It was government that reduced the utility to a bargaining chip, its rates deliberately suppressed and kept low as a ploy to please the masses. When Napocor started hemorrhaging, it was government that kept it afloat through loans and more loans, which partly explains the huge deficit and the financial crisis the country is facing today.

And they say privatization will kill our industries? In the case of Napocor, privatization would no doubt be the best thing that could happen to it. The utility, in fact, remains the most convincing argument of government's inefficiency in running a business. Government and business simply don't mix!

—MICHELE SAWYER,
1809 Leveriza St., Pasay City

Dear Readers, Text us your comments, suggestions and views on today's news or how it was delivered. Tell us about the news you are interested in and the things you want improved in your favorite newspaper. Text INQUIRER <section keyword> name/city/message and send to 283 (Smart) or 2207 (Globe). The section keywords are indicated in the logo of each section.

Are you in favor of giving amnesty to the Oakwood mutineers? Why or why not?

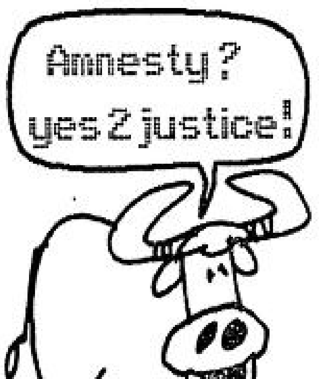
there shud be no mercy to mutineers. if gloria givs dem amnesty, der wud be more coups! i-punish talaga sila.
—oliver allen f. galupo, *cagayan de oro city*

NO. Oakwood mutineers deserve 2 be punished 4 their crime against the state.
—Leon Asuncion, *San Juan*

Punish them first! teach them a lesson how 2 be good soldier! if found guilty, let them suffer.
—Ronnie P. Beltran, *Mandaluyong City*

No! dey r obviously only choosing d easy way out! They either say sorry or they rot in jail. They knew what dey were doing then, let them suffer d consequence unless they reveal d real mastermind.
—RICHMOND UY, *QUEZON CITY*

no, d justice system shud b allowed 2 take its course. d mutineers shud b tried.
—carmencita mindo, *sibulan, negros oriental*


Amnesty? yes 2 justice!

No, such act s traitor in d country, d mutineers should face trials
—Leon S. Tabirara, *Cabuyao, Laguna*

No! let's put a stop 2 all dis charade. Let justice reign n spare d country 4 another misadventurism
—Danilo A. Andrey, *Quezon City*

message Yes, because d mutineers were only fighting for legitimate reforms which has fallen on deaf ears.
—gerry singson, *vigan city*

Oakwood mutineers shud not b given amnesty. altho d mutiny was bloodless, deir grievances shud be addressd by d proper authorities.
—pia oliveros, *alabat, quezon*

No, bcoz they triggered d peaceful state of metro manila & must not b tolerated 2 avoid d occurrence of d same event.
—Liziel Ranalan, *Davao City*

no, they must first answer d consequences of der crime.
—joe baguidudol, *san Fernando*

No, because they have done a lot of harm to the democracy & Filipinos.
—jun abraham, *antipolo*

no, that would be 2 light 4 dem. if some pipol get jailed 4 attempted murder, den dey should also b jailed 4 attempted coup.
—Darlene Sumugat, *Digos city*

no! Granting amnesty will be a bad precedent.
—alfredo r torres, *davao city*

no! rebellion is punishable according to the bible 1st rebellion happened in heaven and lucifer was punished by God. No. everyone can do a rebellion act and expecting to be forgiven—that's hell!
—alfonso tolosa, *bacoor, cavite*

No amnesty 4 d Oakwood mutineers coz dey shud b punished 4 their misdeeds.
—Susana Co, *Quezon City*

no, because d court has not decided yet that they r guilty.
—rolando p, *sinajon, digos city*

i am not in favor of amnesty for the mutineers, for mercy will not satisfy the demands of justice.
—Dr. Genesis Centeno, *baguio city*

No coz it will be a bad precedent to some people who would attempt to overthrow d govt. Let them suffer the consequences.
—JOFREY DE LA CRUZ, *Manila*

Yes, but only if all criminals in this country who just apologize will also b given amnesty.
—CATHY UY, *Q.C.*

NO, dapat cla parusahan 2 d full extent of d law, para wag pamarisan. A traitor is always a traitor, wala ng ipagbabago yan.
—Arvin Bernardino, *Q.C.*

no amnesty! Politicians hav no say in diss matter. Let DOJ do their work. Let mutineers suffer full consequences of their actions.
—grace guiua, *san jose*

NO WAY TO AMNESTY! Have we not learned anything from d past errors? granting them amnesty would invite next coup.
—Bernie Tangunan, *Cubao*

What is your reaction to the plan of the government to raise taxes on cigarettes and alcohol/beer (e.g. P1 to P2 pesos per cigarette pack), to help reduce our fiscal deficit?

Kahit triplihin nyo pa, ok lang para wala ng KRIMEN ng dahil sa mga LASINGGONG YAN! Occasional drinking nalang tayo, SOSYAL pa.
—Chiva, *Iloilo*

The govt shud even tax higher than P2 (at least P5) to help generate more revenue and be a stronger deterrent 4 smokers.
—Edwin Nepunan, *Mandaluyong*

Right move, Wrong reason. Raise taxes 2 Discourage VICES N ADDICTION. Debt payment SHUD ONLY B secondary. Promote health. Look @ Singapore.
—IRENE TING, *QC*

Hope dis wil minimize smokers. Less smokers, less lung diseases, less cost 4 gov't hospitals lyk Quezon Institute, additional savings.
—Benito Sanvictores Jr., *Cainta, Rizal*

Ok yun! Kc kung di pa nila nararamdaman pagkabutas ng kanilang baga, at least ngayon ramdam nila pagkabutas ng kanilang bulsa!
—Ma. Katherine Napa, *Parañaque*

ok lang ang "sin taxes"; at least mababawasan ang nagbibisyo, kikita pa tayo
—winifredo tiangco, *Q.C.*

Long overdue. It also discourages pipol from spending der hard-earned money for health hazards such as these. I suggest doblehin na.
—Raul Pamintuan, *bacoor*

Ok lang itaas ang taxes bec these are not essential commodities n dis will help lower d cases of smoke n liquor-related diseases. Good 4 d air, too.
—edward lim, *manila*

lyk treating cancer wid alcOhl. fiscal crisis is result of dEcAdEs of pro-imperialist, anti-people policies. wat we need is a tOtaly new social system.
—eli Garcia, *dagupan*

Tama yan. Alma lagi pinoy sa new taxes pero pag pasarap sa buhay na alang kwenta, di sila hinayang. Pati motels n sauna na rin kaya?
—Raul Pamintuan, *bacoor*

taxes on cig & alcohol? Very wise decision. We even buy these products jus 2 burn & urinate later. it will not matter much 2 them.
—dennis liang, *iloilo*

dapat talaga taasan ang tax ng cigarilyo para mabawasan din ang smokers kaya lang baka mauwi lang sa wala dahil sa mga ganid sa govt sa pera.
—Bernard favilinia, *cavite*

it wud create a low output of sales & more tax evaders. we have had enuf taxes, wher did all d collected revenues go?
—paul ganaban, *bacolod*

Raising taxes on sin products not only reduces d fiscal deficit but also discourages pipol from using cigarettes & alcohol which do not promote health.
—limuel abrogena, *isabela*

Dapat lang dagdagan ang tax kc mga bisyo un at hindi naman BASIC NEEDS. Ibig sabihin may pera ang bumibili nun.
—Benjie Garcia, *Munoz Science City*

makakabuti ang planong ito ng gobyerno. Di lang ekonomiya ng bansa ang paunti-unting maisasalba, kundi pati narin ang kalusugan ng mga mamamayan.
—pia oliveros, *alabat, quezon*

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Unsolved crimes lead to 17 cops' sacking

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—After a spate of unsolved murders in Tanauan City in Batangas in recent months, the regional director of the Calabarzon police ordered the relief of at least 17 police officers of the city, the INQUIRER learned yesterday.

Chief Supt. Reynaldo Varilla said the officers, whose ranks range from PO1 to SPO3, were relieved from their posts effective Sept. 18 and are now undergoing a retraining course at the Batangas police headquarters in Batangas City.

Other police officers were assigned to become security personnel at the Malampaya gas project, Varilla said.

But he clarified that the policemen were erring officers and belonged to the Taba (Tamad, Abusado, Bastos at Ayaw Padisiplina) kind of policemen.

"Their removal from their assignments was ordinary. We usually do this to improve our men's skills. We want to retool them and give them (a) new atmosphere and working condition," Varilla said in an interview in his office at this camp.

Senior Supt. Perfecto Palad, Calabarzon police director for operations, said some of the officers were "adamant" in going after crime suspects because of their familiarity with the residents.

But he said their decision was not a punishment but a way to make their local police unit "more efficient."

Palad said 20 members of the Batangas Police Provincial Mobile Group were assigned to Tanauan in place of the relieved policemen.

Varilla likewise denied earlier reports which said that the relief of the officers had something to do with the group's alleged involvement in a local drug syndicate operating in the city.

Varilla, however, admitted that the sudden rise in the frequency of crime incidents in Tanauan City was one of the bases of his recommendations.

He said some of the policemen had become lazy in attending to police work as they had grown tired running after suspects of petty crimes and other common criminals, some of whom had befriended them.

Police records showed that since May, there have been several shooting incidents in Tanauan City, which have remained unsolved to date.

These include the ambush-slaying of Tanauan City Regional Trial Court Judge Voltaire Rosales and businessman Armando Lucido. Both were gunned down a few blocks away from the police station.

A few days after, at least three persons suspected of being involved in the illegal drug trade were also shot to death by suspects on board a motorcycle.

The identities of the relieved policemen were not made available immediately but their superiors said their relief was routine. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

MICHAEL-JHUN

UNLOADING AREA BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU
The Davao City Bankerohan Public Market turns into an unloading area from fresh produce from Kapatagan, Davao del Sur at the start of a busy market day.

DOJ urged to tap special prosecutor in Abra

BANGUED, Abra—Gov. Vicente Valera has asked Department of Justice officials to assign a special prosecutor to the police's Special Action Force tasked with restoring peace and order in Abra.

Valera said he was meeting with Justice Secretary Raul Gonzales and Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes on his request. He said the police have complained that their efforts in solving crimes in the province have become futile because cases are immediately dismissed in the prosecutor's level.

Provincial Prosecutor Rodor Gayao, however, belied the police's allegations, saying that they had filed 285 out of 340 cases since January this year.

He said they forwarded other cases to the office of the Ombudsman for government employees or to the *lupon tagapamayapa* (barangay justice).

Gayao said some cases had been dismissed because of the police's failure to establish sufficient evidence.

Despite the executive branch's pessimism about the police ability to restore peace and order in the province, Chief Supt. Rowland Albano, Cordillera police director, assured Abrenians that "everything would be in order."

"So far it (Task Force Abra) has brought some kind of order to the province particularly Bangued town, and it is high time for people to start cooperating," Valera said. *Artha Kira Paredes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Tribal folk vow to protect burial sites vs demolition

BAMBANG, Nueva Vizcaya—Members of a tribal community, who are facing eviction from a disputed land here, vowed to stand firm against a demolition order issued by the Department of Agrarian Reform to protect the burial sites of their family members.

The group of Kalanguya and Ibaloi settlers are facing eviction from a 50-hectare area in Sitio Upper Batu in Barangay Santo Domingo here. The disputed lands are part of the 133-hectare estate owned by Felix Abesamis Jr. and his 10 siblings.

Gilbert Bucasan, 53, said his group has decided not to leave the area following Abesamis' warning that he will push through with the demolition and clear the area of structures put up by about 70 families.

"We refuse to leave because he has vowed to demolish everything, including the tombs of our loved ones," Bucasan said.

He said the area where his group has settled since 1987 has become the site of more than 15 tombs. This is in keeping with the tribal custom of burying their dead within their own backyard, he said.

"We are worried because if they would be able to force us out of the area, then they can destroy the tombs at will," Bucasan said.

Demolition threat

Abesamis has vowed to continue with the aborted Sept. 9 demolition, citing an eviction and demolition order issued by the DAR Adjudication Board (Darab) on May 6, 1998.

The previous demolition was suspended after a team, led by Darab officials and backed up by teams from the police and army, was met with strong resistance by residents. Six houses were torn down, while a woman and a policeman were wounded in an ensuing clash.

In a dialogue on Thursday, the settlers again asked Abesamis and DAR officials that they be allowed to stay on the land.

Bucasan said it was unfair that Abesamis has revived his claim over the property after the settlers, for the past 17 years, have introduced development in what used to be a pastureland.

"With our bare hands, we built the roads, brought in irrigation and turned this land into rice fields and vegetable farms. The other areas have become forests and are now teeming with fruit trees. Now, he will come and get it back?" Bucasan said.

Payment terms

He said they were willing to pay for the areas they have occupied, provided the rates would not be exorbitant.

Abesamis, however, said the occupied portion of their estate is not for sale.

He said they need the land to award to their legitimate farm workers, and to form part of their "retention area" as landowners, which was granted to them by the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law. *Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Scout Rangers, NPAs clash in Compostela; 3 guerrillas slain

DAVAO CITY—Three communist rebels were killed while three others were wounded in an encounter in Mabini town in Compostela Valley on Sunday afternoon.

Col. Ruperto Pabustan, deputy commander of the 404th Infantry Brigade, identified the slain rebels as a certain Ka Zandro, Alfonso and Milky, while the wounded as couple Elmer and Esperanza Bapilar and Angelica Alaba.

Pabustan said the rebels were members of the Front Guerrilla Unit 2 of the New People's Army.

He said government soldiers launched a combat operation after a civilian informant tipped his men on the presence of the rebels in Sitio Banlud, Barangay Libudon in Mabini at around 4:40 p.m. Sunday.

Pabustan said the Scout Rangers, led by Lt. Domingo Saavedra, immediately proceeded to the area and encountered more than 10 rebels.

He said the clash lasted for about 20 minutes.

The military official said that the wounded rebels were later captured.

On Sept. 22, nine rebels, including an NPA leader, were also killed in a clash in Barangay Napnapan in Pantukan, also in Compostela Valley.

The troops were on routine combat patrol when they were ambushed by the communist guerrillas near the valley's Libudon Village, the military said in a statement.

Several automatic rifles left behind by the gunmen as well as a claymore mine and ammunition were also recovered.

Among those left behind by the rebels were a Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR), two M-16s, a Baby Armalite, an M203 grenade launcher, two M-79 grenade launchers and a shotgun.

The soldiers also seized six combat packs and four sacks of documents.

Last week, four policemen, two soldiers and a civilian were killed in NPA attacks across the country.

The policemen were killed in an ambush in Baganga town while the soldiers were slain in an attack in the northern Philippines.

The 8,600-strong NPA and its political leadership, the Communist Party of the Philippines, has been waging a 35-year Maoist armed campaign.

The party announced in August that it was suspending peace talks with the government because of Manila's alleged failure to persuade Western countries to remove the rebels from their lists of international terrorists. *Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau with report from AFP*

Destruction of house with remains enrages Baguio's Ibaloi folk

BAGUIO CITY—The city's Ibaloi community is enraged at the Philippine Economic Zone Authority for demolishing portions of an old house where the remains of an Ibaloi hero and his family are buried.

Councilor Valentin Carantes of Tuba, Benguet, said Peza broke a promise it made last year to protect the grave site of Maximino "Kustacio" Carantes, the Ibaloi coordinator of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo during the Philippine-American war.

Kustacio, his wife, Ugasya, and several relatives are buried under a house that stands on an ancestral land claim inside the Baguio City Economic Zone (BCEZ). The land was reserved originally for a Japanese electronic firm, although indigenous Filipino rights advocates have been urging Peza to declare the gravesite a "heritage park."

Tereso Panga, acting BCEZ administrator, is opening this section of the zone as an expansion area for Moog Controls Corp., one of the city's oldest export firms. At stake is a $40-million investment and 400 more jobs, he said in a statement.

"Considering that the Philippines is not getting much new investments, government should consider ecozone expansions as our saving grace . . . lest we lose our gains (in incremental exports, employment and revenues) to China and other competitors in Asia," Panga said in a Sept. 27 letter to Baguio Councilor Jose Molintas, an Ibaloi.

The city's only ecozone remitted P78.8 million representing Baguio's share from the zone revenues, Panga said.

He said Moog appealed to Peza to resolve the stalemate between the government and Kustacio's heirs over the 19,000-square meter lot that Moog is eyeing.

"Knowing that there are some problems with the availability of lot, the (chief executive officer) of Moog Group had to write (Trade Secretary) Cesar Purisima just to ensure Peza's commitment in providing (them) the needed expansion site," he said.

Panga said Peza will abide by its expansion schedule, and will instead relocate Kustacio's bones to an unspecified site where Peza will build a memorial park. The graves' transfer will be made "with the strict adherence to the Ibalois' rituals and burial practices," he told Molintas.

Jude Joseph Carantes, one of the heirs, said transferring their dead requires a series of rituals.

"Sometimes, we will have to follow the conditions set by the dead, which are manifested in dreams," he said. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Hundreds pay respects to Iloilo TV anchor in necrological rites

By Alex Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—At 29, he was a big frog in a small pond.

Christopher Misajon, known as "Mr. Ratsada" in Iloilo City being the host of the city's No. 1 TV tabloid program, had bigger dreams. He wanted to make it to CNN.

But four robbers cut short this dream. They shot Chris on Sept. 23 after divesting him and a companion of their cellular phones and P500 in cash in Barangay San Rafael in Mandurriao District.

He died two days later from a gunshot wound in the stomach that damaged his internal organs.

Dr. Mervyn Misajon, former president of the Silliman University, remembered his son's passion for his craft and how the public regarded him.

"Everywhere he went, even kids would call out to him, 'Mr. Ratsada!' The masses loved him," he said.

Thinking of his son's passion for life and journalism brought a smile to his father's face, even as he and his family continued to hurt deep inside over the loss of their first-born.

"Chris was not difficult to get along with," noted Francis Allan Angelo, senior reporter of The Guardian, a daily newspaper in Iloilo, which Chris wrote for.

"He could talk about a lot of things, especially our favorite topic—spirituality. He was a very spiritual guy. He also talked a lot about funny things."

It was this that endeared Chris to many people so much so that the people of Iloilo City trooped by the hundreds to pay their last respects when his closed casket was displayed at the Central Philippine University Church.

"Sometime ago, Chris went to a wake and felt uncomfortable at the sight of people looking at the body from various angles," Dr. Misajon said.

"At that time, he told his wife, Jade, when it's my time, I don't want people looking down at me."

Happy faces

Instead of viewing a body, people who attended the wake found several happy photographs of Chris from the time he was a baby until he became a journalist, arranged by his friends from Silliman.

A Philippine flag also draped his casket since he was a reserve officer of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

On Sept. 28, the Misajons flew Chris' remains to Cebu where Jade and Chris lived for five years.

His remains were brought to the Rolling Hills Cebu Memorial Chapel for a one-day wake before the cremation the next day.

His students and faculty from University of the Philippines College Cebu (UPCC) as well as his teachers, classmates and top officials in Silliman University trooped to the funeral chapel to pay their last respects.

Also at the wake were members of the Cebu media and the Greenhills Christian Fellowship-Cebu.

"Chris and I promised that we would be at each other's important event, so here I am," said Greg Morales, Chris' best friend at Silliman who now works as an advertising photographer in Manila.

Morales' reminiscences of the happy times he shared with Chris brought smiles not only to the Misajon family, but also to all the other people who attended the Tuesday night service.

Chris is a product of Silliman University. He graduated in 1997 with a degree of Bachelor in Mass Communication.

It was in Silliman where Chris met Jade, then a student at the SU College of Nursing. "Chris taught me to love again and he also led me to the Lord," Jade said.

Married life

After a few years of going steady, they got married after graduation. The couple then moved to Cebu City where Chris worked for ABS-CBN and taught at the UPCC.

After five years, they relocated to Iloilo City, where he worked with GMA as a news anchor and wrote for a daily newspaper.

As a journalist, Chris showed unparalleled devotion to his craft. "That is one consistent thing I noticed in Chris," Dr. Misajon said.

Samar villagers elect barangay execs 2 yrs late

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—This was a classic case of better late than never.

Two years after the barangay elections, close to 80 residents of a hinterland village in Oras town, Eastern Samar trooped on Saturday to the polling precinct to cast their votes for their preferred candidates for barangay captain and councilors.

Lawyer Jose Nick Mendros, acting chief of the Commission on Elections (Comelec) in Eastern Visayas, said the special elections in Barangay Cadi-an only covered 192 registered voters under Precinct 13-A2.

The entire barangay has four precincts with 636 registered voters.

During the July 15, 2002 barangay elections, Mendros said ballot boxes from Precinct 13-A2 were snatched by armed men believed to be members of the New People's Army.

Remote

He said the proclamation of the winners was stalled because results in Precinct 13-A2 could affect the outcome of the elections in Cadi-an, which is more than an hour away by pump boat from the Oras town proper.

Then outgoing barangay captain Nieto Medija was told by Department of Interior and Local Government in Oras to continue serving as village chief in a holdover capacity.

Last Sept. 8, the Comelec *en banc* issued a resolution for the holding of special elections in Cadi-an.

Mendros said the Comelec regional office received the order on Sept. 28 and immediately made preparations for the holding of the special elections on Saturday.

The resolution followed the filing of a petition by Romeo Paligutan, a candidate for barangay captain, asking the poll body to hold a special election in Precinct 13-A2.

Quick results

Mendros said the conduct of the special elections in Cadi-an was "peaceful" and that the results were released two hours after the precinct was closed.

He said about nine policemen and 20 soldiers from the 14th Infantry Battalion based in the neighboring town of Dolores were deployed inside the Cadi-an Elementary School.

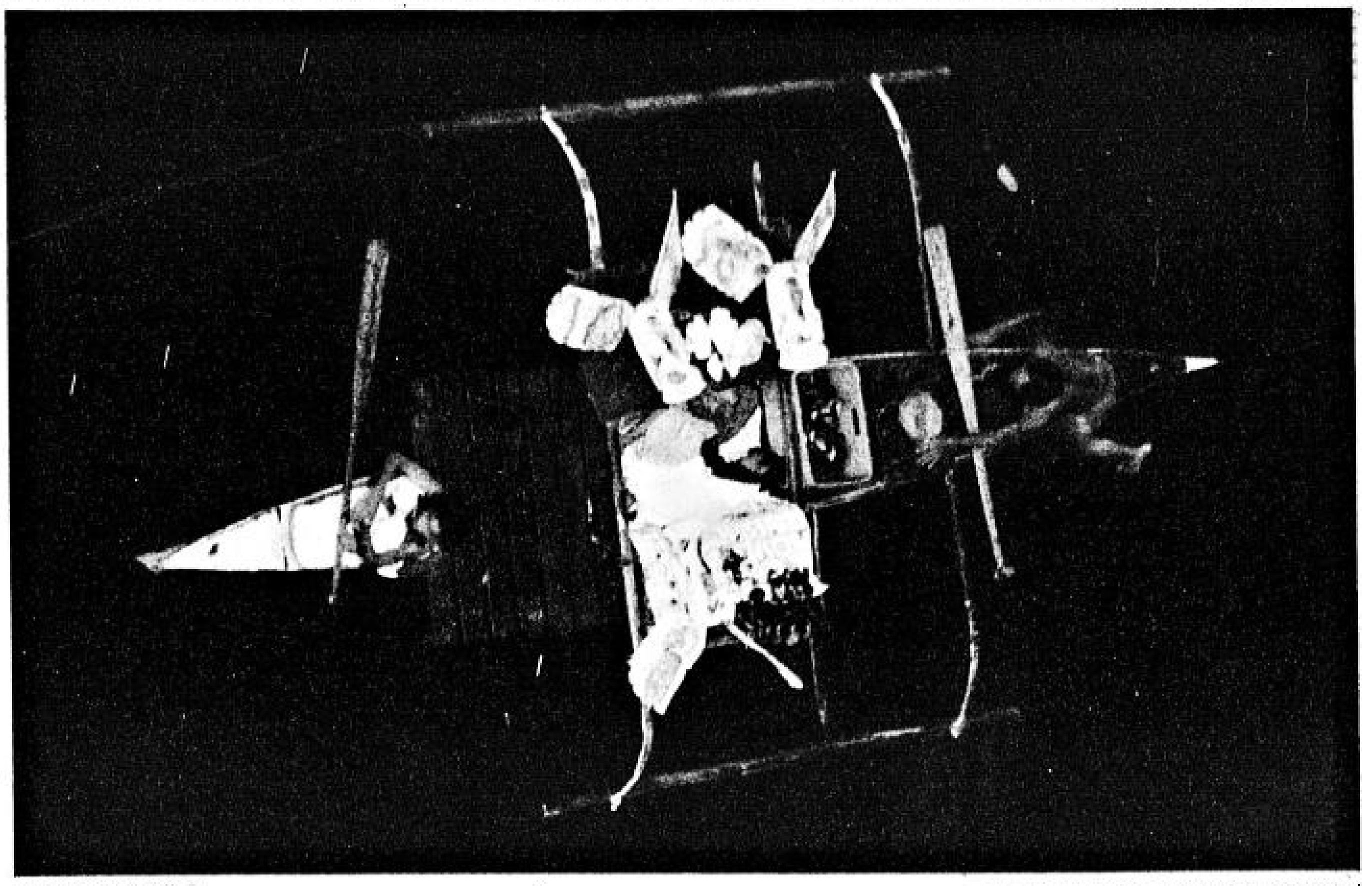
Paligutan was declared the new barangay captain. The newly elected members of the barangay council were Evelyn Madeja, Nida Cebaga, Mario Madeja, Ananias Balase, Antonio Montiagodo, Cesar Amaira and Jose Nugas Jr.

Mendros said the new set of barangay officials will serve their terms until a new barangay election is held.

"The barangay elections might be held on 2007 yet," he added.

Comelec results showed that Paligutan got 78 votes in Precinct 13-A2, while rival Pedro Mengullo got one vote. Another candidate, Gil Montibon, did not receive any vote in Precinct 13-A2.

Prior to the special elections, Paligutan garnered 278 votes in the village's three other precincts and Montibon got 85 and Mengullo got none.



EDWIN BACASMAS/PDI PHOTO

SEA TRADERS
A family of Badjaos sells their woodcarvings and seashells even late at night in Zamboanga City.

Gov offers to give up post if abuse raps proven

COTABATO CITY—First, a month's leave of absence. Now, he is willing to give up his post if charges against the family were true.

North Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol yesterday dared put up this challenge after Bishop Romulo Valles issued a pastoral letter, which was read in various churches, castigating the governor's family as abusive.

Last month, Piñol filed a 30-day leave of absence so as not to influence an ongoing investigation of a beating incident involving his brother Ferdinand.

Piñol's recommendation to relieve Chief Insp. Alexander Tagum as Kidapawan police chief following the escape of suspected thief Alvin Valdez is also being investigated.

Church-backed cause-oriented group Kalampag said the governor's and his siblings involvement in these controversies was "abuse of power."

The pastoral letter hit the governor for allegedly building a political dynasty of abusive officials in North Cotabato, referring to Magpet Mayor Efren Piñol, M'lang Vice Mayor Joselito Piñol, ex-Kidapawan City councilor now provincial administrator Bernardo Piñol Jr. and confidential provincial employee Ferdinand Piñol.

Pat Piñol, a retired police colonel, could have been added to the so-called dynasty of politicians, if it were not for his defeat in the Kidapawan mayoral elections this year.

"Why accuse us of dynasty when the people are the ones choosing their candidates? If they want the Piñols can you stop them? Besides, there is no law that prohibits family members from seeking elective positions," the governor said.

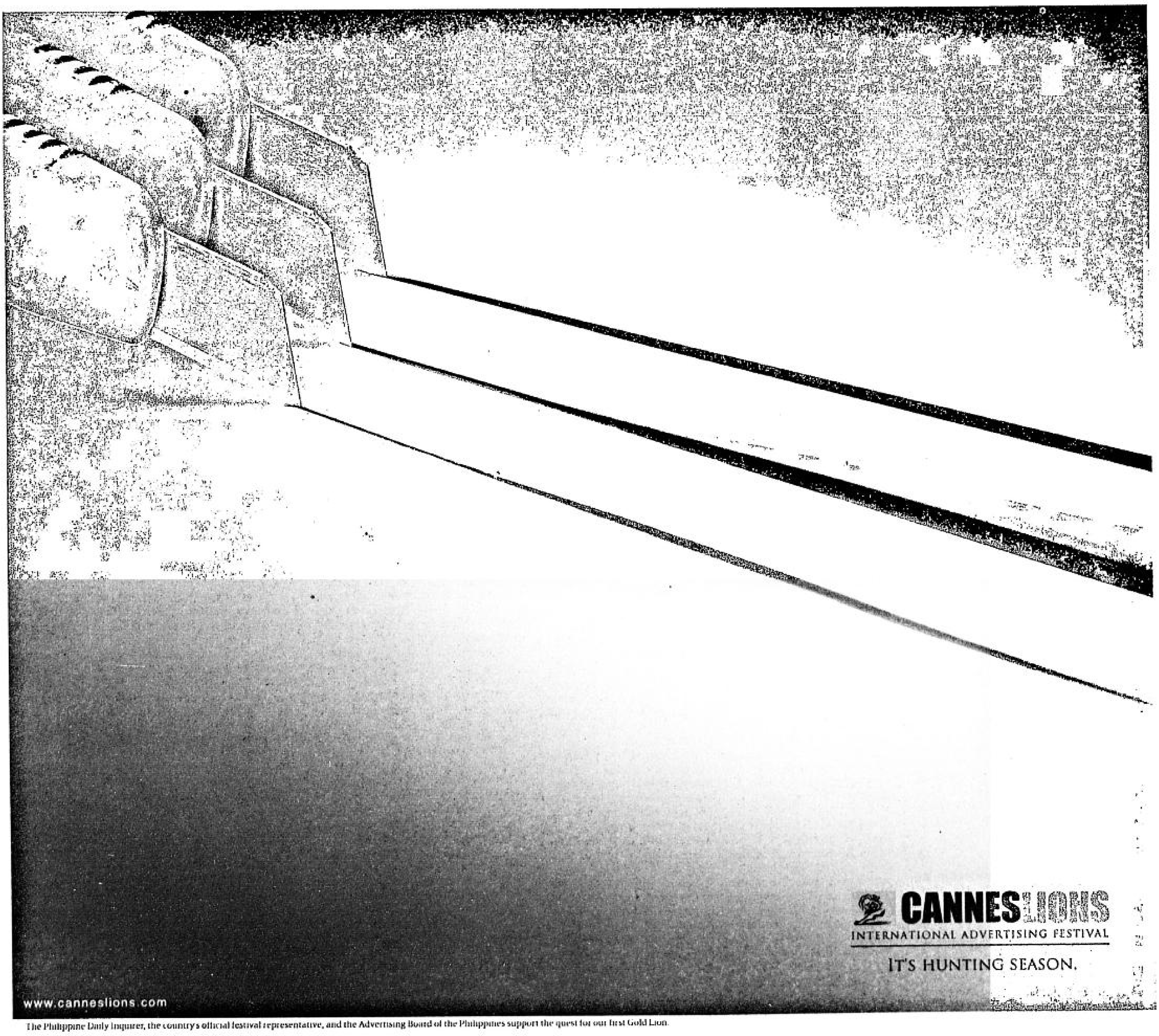
"There are several issues raised to discredit not only my leadership but the family as well in the name of good governance," said Piñol, who considered these allegations as a ploy to deceive the public.

The latest issue against the family was the statement of a certain Boyet Collado who claimed that the Piñol brothers threatened to kill him.

Collado, according to the governor, met a vehicular accident while riding a motorcycle in Kidapawan on May 6 and was hospitalized for injuries. The Piñol siblings spent about P300,000 for Collado's recovery.

"How can the claim that we want to kill him hold water when we were the ones who helped save his life?" the governor asked.

Speaking over radio station dxCA, a Kidapawan-based station purportedly owned by former North Cotabato Rep. Gregorio Andolana, Collado insisted that he was beaten up by the group of Bernardo Piñol Jr. *Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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Dismissed janitor holds 7 pupils hostage

RADAN after surrender: "All I wanted was to talk about my case."

A TEACHER escorts students from their classrooms at St. Stephen's High School in Tondo, Manila, to a safe place after janitor Moises Radan took seven pupils hostage earlier.

PHOTOS BY ERIK ARAZAS

By Leila B. Salaverria

FOR AN hour, terror gripped the St. Stephen's High School in Tondo, Manila, yesterday after a dismissed janitor held seven young students hostage inside a bathroom, claiming his supervisor had refused to talk to him about his case.

Fortunately, Moises Radan, 33, did not find the need to use two guns that he had grabbed from school watchmen to harm pupils of the institution with a predominantly Chinese-Filipino student population.

Radan surrendered after extracting a promise from school chaplain Paul Tanjuatco and Western Police District director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong that he would be able to get his job back and that he would not be charged for his act.

A father of three, Radan told reporters that he took the students—four boys and three girls—because he wanted to get the attention of his supervisor and school officials so he could know the reason for his dismissal. Radan had been working for St. Stephen's for nine months before he was dismissed.

Joy Dy, St. Stephen's High School principal, said the suspect was dismissed after he had been accused of stealing, but added that his employment agency would be the one to investigate him on the matter.

Radan said he had been trying to get an explanation for his dismissal, but was allegedly ignored.

"*Ngayong gumawa ako ng masama saka ako kinakausap pero noong gumagawa ako ng mabuti ayaw ako kausapin* (Now that I've done a bad thing, they are talking to me but when I was doing good things, they did not want to speak to me)," Radan said.

The janitor had returned to the school on Masangkay Street yesterday morning to seek his reinstatement, said Supt. George Gaddi, commander of Station 2 in Tondo.

The security men then told Radan to wait. When watchman Joey Jamilia put down his shotgun to eat, Radan grabbed the firearm and a Grade 1 student who had entered the school.

Another guard, Henry Bustamante then tried to fight off Radan, but the latter was also able to grab Bustamante's .38 firearm.

Radan then ran toward a classroom and herded six nursery students, and the Grade 1 student he had grabbed earlier, to a bathroom.

School officials then called up the authorities for help. Worried parents began arriving soon after.

While Radan was holed up in the bathroom with the students, he began to open fire when he saw policemen and the Special Weapons and Tactics team. The suspect fired the shotgun once, hitting the ceiling, and the .38 gun thrice, hitting the walls and windows.

None of the shots hit the seven hostages. Radan said later that it was not his intention to harm the students.

"*Kinakausap ko sila, sinasabi ko sa kanila na hindi ko sila sasaktan* (I talked to the students and I assured them that I would not hurt them)," he said.

Later, the school chaplain and police officials managed to negotiate for Radan's surrender

Police said Radan could face charges, especially since the students' parents wanted him held responsible. Radan was brought to the General Assignment Section of the WPD yesterday, where he is detained.

Stalls turn down used cell phones

By Luige A. del Puerto

THE POLICE'S antifencing efforts in eastern Metro Manila commercial centers have begun to yield positive results.

In San Juan, some stall owners have opted not to sell second-hand cell phones from their stores—a sign that the message is getting through, according to Supt. Rodel Jocson, town police chief.

"It's doing very well," Jocson said, referring to several measures agreed upon by the police and stall owners from Greenhills, one of the biggest cell phone sales centers in Metro Manila.

As agreed upon, stall owners have started providing the police with an inventory of second-hand mobile phones on display. They have also started asking those who sell or trade in second-hand phones for ID cards.

The inventory lists the brand name and serial number of the displayed phones, including those that were already sold. Each stall must also get a certificate from the police chief's office stating that its phones have been acquired legally.

"They have been very cooperative," Jocson said. "In fact, a few stalls have decided to drop altogether the sale of second-hand phones." Although the statistics are vague, it is widely accepted that some of the phones sold in shopping centers, such as Greenhills in San Juan or Arranque in Manila, are stolen.

RP MATH WIZARDS WIN INT'L AWARDS
Seventeen students from the Philippines won the major awards in the recent 5th International World Youth Mathematics International Contest held recently in Macau. The awardees were Jan Henri Ma of Trinity Christian School, gold medal; silver medalists: Jimmy Ong, Jr. of Bacolod Tay Tung High School, Charles William Ang and Sam Christian Lee of Chiang Kai Shek College, John Garret Go of St. Stephen's High School and Elvis Chua of Zamboanga Chong Hua High School. Bronze medalists: Miguel Isidro Cariño of Ateneo de Manila High School, Jason Sim of Chiang Kai Shek College, Daryl Jonathan Lee of Grace Christian High School, Jerwin Alliguy of Philippine Cultural High School, Chiara Lanuza and Jan David Monzon of Philippine Science High School-Main, Kyna Elyse Cheu of Sacred Heart School-Jesuit, John Carlo Clerigo of St. Benedict College, Johann Dy of St. Stephen's High School, Abigail Ceralde and Richmond Saavedra of Zamboanga Chong Hua High School. The local participation was facilitated by Mathematics Trainers' Guild Philippines.

Bribe try to drop case bared

By Nancy C. Carvajal

THE PRINCIPAL suspect in the killing of journalist Jose Villanueva—or his friends—apparently have plenty of money to buy his way out of jail.

Police Senior Insp. Joey Goforth, the investigator handling the case, told the INQUIRER yesterday that an unidentified woman had offered him P300,000 at 2 a.m. last Sunday to drop the case against Rommel Capones. Goforth claimed he did not know the woman's name, but City Hall sources said that she is a high official of the Pasay City government. She was also allegedly responsible for the dropping of charges of the other cases against Capones, the sources added.

Goforth said the offer was made after they arrested the mothers of Capones and Gerry Cecilio, another suspect in the killing, for forcing a minor to give a false statement to the police in their sons' favor. He said another police officer, PO2 Mike Manarang, was inside the intelligence unit office at the Pasay City police station when the woman approached him.

Goforth said he told the woman: "*Tingnan natin*(Let's see)." He said he immediately informed his superior officers about the bribe. Capones is now detained at the city jail with Cecilio and Henry Lizardo, another suspect.

Human rights education cited

PUBLIC school educators and teachers cited the importance of human rights education (HRE) at a training program held in Tagaytay City recently, making people aware of their "inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family."

The HRE jointly conducted by the Department of Education and the Commission of Human Rights (CHR) conducted recently was attended by supervisors, principals and master teachers. The CHR commended the teachers in their roles as human rights advocates in their schools and communities.

"Teaching human rights early enough, along with teaching the basics of ABCs and intricacies of 1,2,3s, is among the ultimate investments," said CHR chair Purification C. Valera-Quisumbing.

Among the provisions in the HRE is that it "must be taught at all levels of the educational system, as well as in out-of-school settings, including the family, and in continuing education programs, including literacy and post-literacy programs."

It was also noted that HRE should be taught to both youth and adults who cannot avail of such opportunities in the formal school system, but can attend nonformal education sessions.

Victor needs your help

VICTOR Cajala has been suffering from avascular necrosis, a degenerative disease that hit both his hip joints, affecting his mobility for the past seven years.

Because of the pain, he had to stop from his work and studies.

"I hardly can walk due to the pain and I am now advised to walk with a cane to avoid a sudden joint collapse," he said in a letter to the INQUIRER.

Doctors said he has to undergo a surgical procedure called Total Hip Replacement where an artificial joint would be implanted in both hips.

Early this year, he was able to undergo his first surgery, replacing his right hip joint through the help of donors.

He needs another operation so that he could have his left hip joint replaced with an artificial one.

"My left hip joint is severely collapsing and I need to raise again at least P100,000 for this operation," he said.

His parents and siblings, who reside in La Union, also have no means to provide for his operation.

Cajala said he would like to continue his studies in De La Salle University-College of St. Benilde, where he is a college scholar, when he is well.

Interested donors may contact the patient at 458-0647 or 0927-6500164 and 0918-2945593.

He can also be reached at 2068-H Mangubat Ext., Aurora St., Pasay City.

Jocelyn Uy

NTC policy for news, talk shows out

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission has ordered television and radio networks to tape news, talk shows and even magazine-type programs, and preserve the record for 10 days to give the Commission basis for evaluating complaints.

The Commission, in a circular issued last week, effectively used its regulatory power over media content, something it was previously reluctant to do.

NTC Chair Ronald Solis stressed that the new policy to take effect in the middle of the month would not be a form of censorship.

He also denied that the circular was related to a complaint made in April by television giant ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. against fierce rival GMA Network Inc. on the latter's coverage of the reported ouster of comedian Dolphy after he campaigned actively for Fernando Poe Jr.

Solis said the complaint had not been acted upon, and so he could not comment on the issue.

But he insisted the incident was not related to the NTC move as the circular had been in the works for quite a while, but was just recently approved.

"The rationale is for us to evaluate whether TV and radio stations comply with KBP program standards, which KBP members themselves agreed to follow.

"It only covers talk shows and news programs where libelous remarks could be made," said Solis.

KBP is short for Kapisanan ng mga Brodkasters ng Pilipinas, an association of almost all broadcast networks, except for GMA Network Inc. that resigned from the group last year.

The NTC circular provided a fine of P5,000 for the first offense.

Subsequent violations would be meted with a fine, plus a suspension or revocation of licenses and permits, according to the circular.

ABS-CBN and GMA both refused to comment on the circular, with network executives only saying they would study the circular first before issuing any statement.

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Teen witness tells all

By Leila B. Salaverria

A TEENAGER claiming to be a cohort of the seven suspected robbers killed in a shootout with National Bureau of Investigation agents in Laguna last week has turned himself in to the bureau to share information on the group with the agency.

The 19-year-old witness came to the NBI on Sunday and told investigators that he had been with the seven men during the planning of the RGL robbery a few weeks earlier.

The witness will disprove claims that the seven men, suspected of being members of the Digoy robbery group, had been killed in a rubout, an NBI source said.

The seven were killed at the Ecocentrum Business Park in Binan, Laguna, on Friday, after they allegedly robbed the RGL factory owned by Eddie Lee in Barangay Looc, Calamba, Laguna.

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No gold, only infection

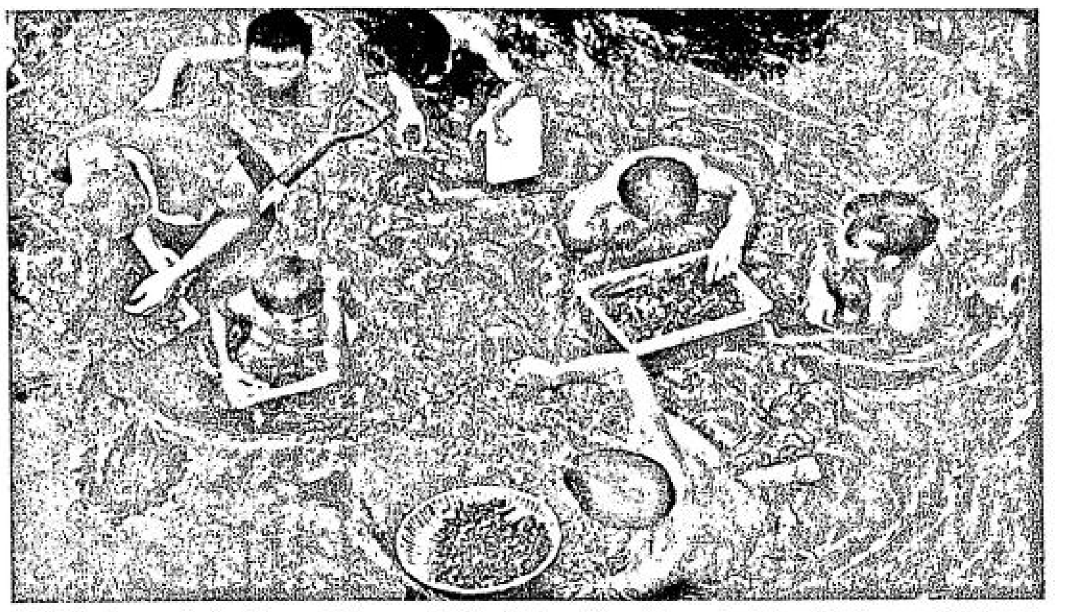
By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

PACK up, there's nothing there.

This was the advice of a government geologist to hundreds of people who have flocked to a polluted stream in Quezon City looking for gold nuggets in the last few days.

"We are discouraging them from searching for gold simply because there are no such deposits there, Mines and Geo-Sciences Bureau geologist Edwin Rillon told the INQUIRER yesterday. "They are just exposing themselves to infections because the stream is very dirty."

A few days ago, residents found what they said were gold nuggets under the Felix Bridge in Barangay del Monte. The news led hundreds of residents nearby rushing to the trash-filled stream.


FLASH in the pan, but not the real thing, a geologist said about the gold reportedly found in Barangay Del Monte in Quezon City. Huge crowds have flocked to the site with the hope of finding the precious nuggets. JOAN BONDOC

Yesterday afternoon, based on police estimates, almost 200 persons were seen panning for nuggets in the murky waters.

Three policemen of the Baler Police Station have already been deployed in the area to maintain order.

Rillon said the rocks found in the stream were mostly adobe, which does not host the natural mineralization of gold.

It is likely that the "gold nuggets" found earlier had been dumped there or had been carried by the current, he added.

One theory they are looking into is a claim that a resident, who gets junk from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, had dumped two drums of scrap metals near the river on one occasion.

The debris could have drifted to the stream when water overflowed during heavy rains.

Said village watchman Armando Vicente: "*Kung talagang may ginto diyan, matagal na kamingnaging pinakamayamang barangay dito*(If there indeed was gold, we would have been the richest barangay here by now)."

New bus route before holidays

By Margaux C. Ortiz

NO ROOM for complaints from bus operators this time.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando said that with the agency's efforts to improve the Organized Bus Route (OBR) project on Edsa, operators are expected to cooperate and ensure the scheme's success on its re-implementation.

"We listened to their complaints and gave in to their suggestions," he said. "It's about time they follow us to make this system work."

Fernando said the OBR scheme would be strictly implemented on Edsa before December in anticipation of the heavy traffic brought about by the holidays.

Endpoint terminals

The MMDA had introduced the OBR scheme late last year to prevent passenger buses from plying Edsa at the same time.

Under the scheme, the buses would be kept in endpoint terminals and then sent out depending on the number of passengers along Edsa at a given time.

The MMDA chair said the scheme did not succeed at first because of lapses like failing to identify endpoint terminals and special loading and unloading stations for the buses. There were only two existing endpoint terminals in Navotas and Baclaran when the project was first launched last year.

MMDA Traffic Operations Center Executive Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said the endpoint terminals are at the Food Terminal Inc., Taguig; Alabang, Muntinlupa City; domestic airport, Pasay City; Fairview, Quezon City; and Malanday, in Valenzuela City.

Pasig bags 8 health awards

By Ruth L. Navarra

THE PASIG City General Hospital (PCGH) received the distinction of the Most Outstanding Healthy Hospital in Metro Manila.

The second Philippine Health Promotion Program (PHPP) awarded seven other establishments in Pasig as outstanding "healthy places": Most Outstanding Healthy School—Buting Elementary School; second runner-up, Most Healthy Market—Mutya ng Pasig Public Market; first runner-up, Most Healthy Motel/ Hotel—Victoria Suites; Nadia International for Healthy Work place on a small scale basis; Most Healthy Movie House—Robinson's Movieworld; Most Healthy Work Place—Selecta Walls; and Most Outstanding Healthy School—Santolan High School.

The Pasig city government also distributed green cards to its constituents to be used for laboratory and hospital services at the PCGH.

A six-story, 300 bed capacity extension building of PCGH is now under construction as part of Pasig City Mayor Vicente Eusebio's health welfare program for the residents.

The building features state of the art medical equipment.

It is expected to be operational next year.

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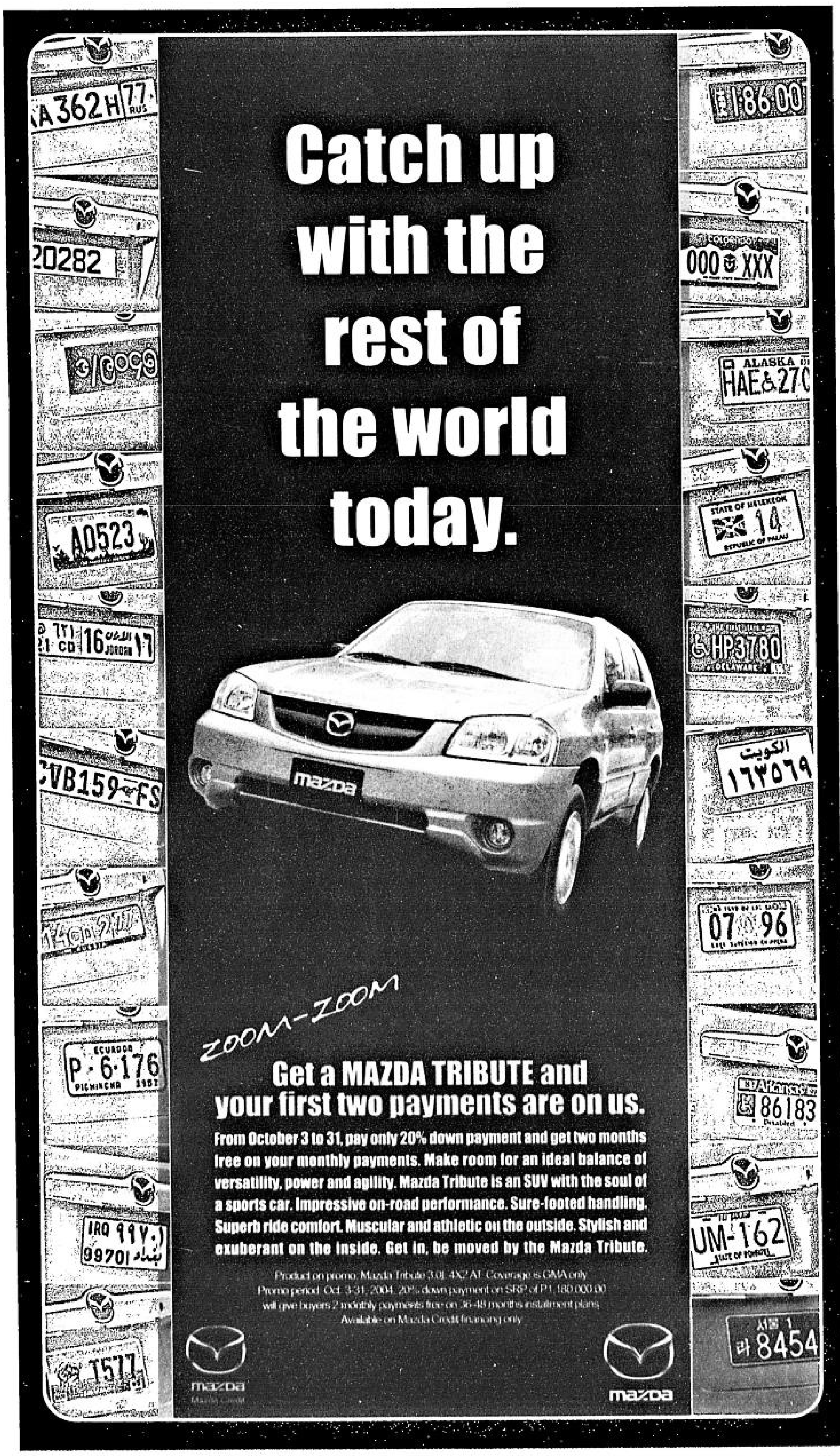
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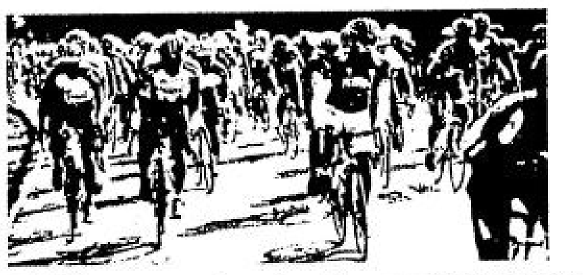
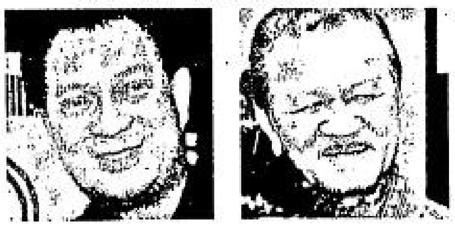
AMERICAN FOOTBALL: NFL-Chiefs vs Ravens; 9 a.m. (r-8:30 p.m.); ESPN—Kansas City takes on Baltimore in the AFC.
BASEBALL: MLB-Division Series, Game One; tomorrow at 1 a.m. and 5 a.m.; ESPN—The race for the World Series begins.
BASKETBALL: WNBA Playoffs; 7 a.m. (r-12:30 p.m.); ESPN—It's Game Two of the Conference Finals.
Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

WHAT'S INSIDE



■ Veterans dominate early velodrome, road events /A20

■ 38 votes to decide next POC chief /A20



■ Els snares WGC title /A21

■ Suzuki zooms with new record /A21

TWO STARS
Last year's MVP Asi Taulava of Talk 'N Text shares centerstage with Asia's songbird, Regine Velasquez, during Sunday's glittering PBA opening at the Big Dome. AUGUSTO DELA CRUZ

Bondad apologizes, wants to play for RP

By Musong R. Castillo

AFTER blasting the National Golf Association of the Philippines for her aborted trip to the World Amateur golf championship,. the reigning national ladies champion has declared she would love to represent the Philippines in the Southeast Asian Games which the country is hosting next year.

Frances Bondad, the 16-year-old Australian-based ace golfer, issued a public apology through an e-mail to the INQUIRER, saying she regretted all the harsh words she said in the wake of her failure to make it to the World Amateur set this month in Puerto Rico.

"I just said what I felt, which was out of emotion and anger, and I do regret the comments I stated," said Bondad, who was born in the United States and now lives with her Filipino parents in Sydney. "I know what I said was wrong, and I do feel like I've shamed my own country."

"I apologize to Filipinos in general, (because) what I said about representing Australia would be the last thing they want to hear from me."

When Bondad gave up her slot to the RP team because of several kinks in her application for an RP passport, she announced she would be defending her national title next year as an Australian.

Bondad is scheduled to return to the Philippines on Dec. 29, together with her mother, to take her oath as a Filipino.

BONDAD: What I said was wrong.

She also said that playing for the Philippines in the World Amateur in Puerto Rico later this month would not have been possible even if she had been able to obtain a Philippine passport on time.

"I've realized that now is not the right time for me to change my Australian identity. My Australian amateur status would have been done for. Living in Australia, I would not have been eligible for selection to any teams over here."

"However, I will represent the Philippines in the SEA Games because it only involves the South East Asian region. I am happy to wear the Philippine colors, represent our country and win gold."

She also promised that when she turns pro, she would be playing for the Philippines, just like Jenny Rosales.

Bondad, who has both US and Australian passports, made seething statements last week at the height of the NGAP's efforts to bring her over and play in the World Am.

Her place in the RP team was later filled up by Lora Roberto, who joined early qualifiers Anya Tanpinco and Jayvee Agojo.

NCAA king Espinas likely top PBL rookie selection

BADLY in need of a player as deadly and efficient as Larry Fonacier, Lee Pipes-Ateneo is likely to make NCAA Most Valuable Player Gabby Espinas the No. 1 pick when the Philippine Basketball League (PBL) holds its Rookie Draft today at the Makati Coliseum.

The 6-foot-5 Espinas, who helped Philippine Christian University win its first-ever NCAA crown, is among the blue chip players who made themselves available for the regular draft. The cat-quick forward has a soft touch from the perimeter and is a ferocious rebounder.

Fonacier, Ateneo's top gunner, suffered a serious foot ligament injury in the early part of the UAAP tournament, and Espinas should be a worthy replacement.

Ninety-five players have signified their interest to join the draft, not including those in the dispersal pool following the leave of absence filed by Blu Star Detergent, Hapee Toothpaste and Sunkist-UST.

Aside from Espinas, who made history in the NCAA by winning both the Rookie and MVP honors, other big name players in the regular draft are Adamson behemoth Karl Kenneth Bono, PCU's Jason Castro and Ian Vincent Garrido, Noy Javier, Fritz Bauzon and Vladymir Joe of Perpetual Help.

After Lee Pipes-Ateneo, Montaña Pawnshop will pick second, followed by Toyota Otis-Letran, Welcoat Paints, Viva Mineral Water-FEU, ICTSI-La Salle, General Milling Corp. (GMC) and newcomer Air Philippines.

ESPINAS: No. 1 pick? JESS YUSON

The Jewels are reportedly eyeing the 6-foot-5 Bono, while the hulking Joseph Ronald Quinahan of Cebu is expected to be the cornerstone of GMC's maiden campaign.

Jerwin Castro, Jayvee Casio, Ryan Arana, Tim Gatchalian, Oliver Cua and Mark Benitez are expected to be elevated by ICTSI-La Salle to its PBL roster.

3 Filipinos reach 2nd round of ITF Juniors

THREE locals, led by first leg runner-up Nico Riego De Dios, hurdled their first-round matches yesterday in the Phinma Group Futures Foundation ITF Juniors Circuit at the Yñares Socio-Cultural Sports Center in Pasig City.

The unranked Riego De Dios downed Taiwan's Tseng Te-keng, 6-0, 6-2, to advance against Korean qualifier Kim Sung Ho, who ousted sixth seed Filipino Ralph Kevin Barte, 0-6, 6-4, 6-4.

Third seed Kyle Joshua Dandan, the highest ranked Filipino in the ITF Juniors at No. 506, breezed past Italian Barnabas Carrega, 6-2, 6-2, to advance against Korean qualifier Cho Soong Jae, a 7-5, 6-3 winner over Taiwan's Peng Hsieh-yin.

Fourth seed Miguel Narvaez defeated Japanese Toshiya Suzuki, 6-3, 6-2, to advance against Korean qualifier Mun Ju Hae, a 6-1, 6-3 victor over Indon Suwandi Seno Harto.

Top seed and ITF Juniors No. 192 Chang Huai-En and second seed

3 FILIPINOS/ A21

North raps South in NBC All-Stars

BAGUIO CITY—The South All-Stars swept the skills events but the North cagers upstaged them, 93-87, in the first National Basketball Conference All-Star game Saturday night at the UB gym here.

Batangas 29ers' Sonny Manucat poured in nine of his 20 points from the 3-point arc in the pivotal third quarter to power the North Selection to victory and bag the Gatorade Most Valuable Player award.

The 6-foot-2 forward also grabbed two rebounds and had two assists and three steals to avenge the North All-Stars' disaster in the skills events.

"We needed to play as a team to offset their (South Stars) individual talents," said North coach Nap Garcia.

Earlier, Tribu Sugbu skipper Ruen de la Rosa emerged as NBC's first slam dunk king by beating Laguna Spring's Reymund Lingal, while Chico Lanete, also of Cebu, ruled the shoot-out and the speed challenge in the show sponsored by Concorde Hotel, Baguio Country Club, Molten, Tokyo Tokyo, Gatorade, Chi's Fastfood, Angle's Bar, Fillers Bar, Greenwich, Gerry's Grill and Beehive Bar.

De la Rosa converted a difficult reverse dunk and capped his performance with a left-handed tomahawk dunk to win, 85-72.

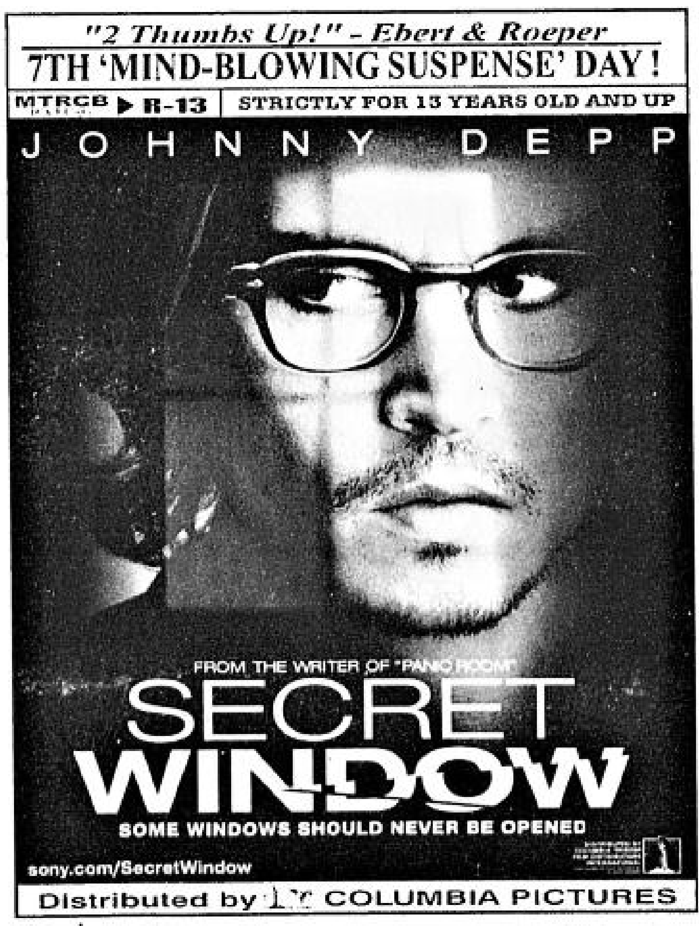
Ozamiz's Egay Echavez, who lost in the shoot-out, paired with ex-Ginebra player Marlon Piodo to take the 2-ball title with 57 points.

The scores:

NORTH 93—Manucat 20, Gumatay 20, Balares 17, Valdes 10, Giron 8, Fontanilla 7, Robillos 7, Sta. Cruz 4, Ton 2, Caceres 2.

SOUTH 87—De la Rosa 19, Grijaldo 16, Sanz 9, Navales 8, Echavez 7, Larong 7, Laneta 6, Piodo 2, Allecha 0.

Quarters: 21-19, 44-41, 68-62, 93-87.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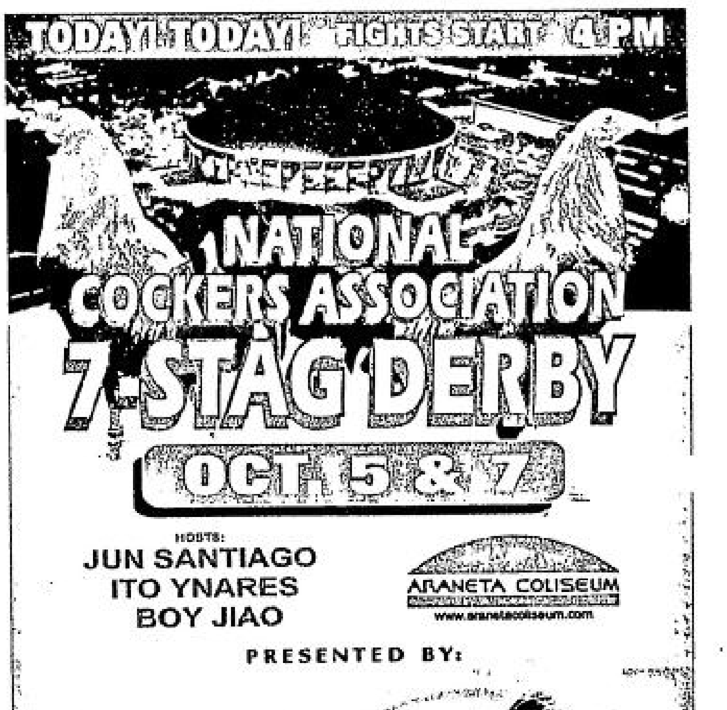

BASKETBALL NEW YEAR
29
DAYS TO GO
29 - Grant Hill's number of triple doubles for his whole career. He's ready to make another comeback this year with the new-look Orlando Magic, starting Nov. 3, 2004. NBA TV on Solar Sports - We Love This Game.
Orlando Magic
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38 votes to decide who'll be next POC chief

DAYRIT

COJUANGCO

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THERE will be 38 and not 36 votes to be cast to determine the next Philippine Olympic Committee president on Nov. 26.

The updated list of voters for the coming POC polls is made up of 37 regular national sports associations plus the vote of the International Olympic Committee representative Frank Elizalde.

This means incumbent POC president Celso Dayrit and his chief rival, equestrian president Jose ``Peping" Cojuangco, would need at least 20 votes to assure a victory.

Under POC rules, a candidate must get 50 percent of the total votes cast plus one.

Dayrit is seeking a third term against Cojuangco, a veteran politician who had already served as bowling and golf presidents.

Chess, which was endorsed for regular membership by the POC general assembly last week, is hoping to get a last-minute permit to vote but its fate depends on the POC executive council which will convene after the Southeast Asian Games Federation meeting on Oct. 11-12.

Lawn bowls, already a regular member, may yet get stripped of its voting right after its president, Ronalyn Greenlees, said she's not sure whether her association had applied for regular membership.

The leadership in swimming, on the other hand, is being tackled by the POC arbitration committee. Olympian Mark Joseph and Chito Ilagan both claim they have been elected Pasa president.

Chess, now headed by athletics president Go Teng Kok, is leaning toward Cojuangco, while lawn bowls is said to be inclined toward Dayrit.

The NSAs eligible to vote are archery, athletics, badminton, baseball, basketball, billiards and snookers, bodybuilding, bowling, boxing, canoeing/kayaking, dragonboat, cycling, equestrian, fencing, football, golf, gymnastics, judo, karatedo, lawn bowl, lawn tennis, pencak silat, rowing, sailing, sepak takraw, shooting, soft tennis, softball, squash, swimming, table tennis, taekwondo, triathlon, volleyball, weightlifting, wushu and wrestling.

They will decide who will serve as chair, president, first vice president, second vice president, treasurer, auditor and four board of directors. The president normally picks the secretary general.

Veterans dominate early velodrome, road events

THE VETERANS grabbed the limelight as expected in yesterday's National Open track racing at the Amoranto Velodrome in Quezon City and road's massed start in Tagaytay City and Batangas.

Arnel Quirimit, the 2003 Tour Pilipinas champion, led a 1-2-3 finish by the national team veterans in the 168.7-kilometer massed start Elite event that was raced on an out-and-back course in Tagaytay City.

Quirimit clocked four hours, 46 minutes and 12.91 seconds in bagging the gold medal over sprint king Enrique Domingo. Warren Davadilla checked in third in the 130-man field in 4:47:33.72.

Irish Valenzuela, an 18-year-old member of the national developmental pool under former Tour champion Renato Dolosa, won the 81.2-km race that lured 40 aspiring youngsters. He clocked 2:28:34.88.

Rounding out the top three in the juniors event were Jaybop Pagnanawon, son of former Tour champion Rolando Pagnanawon, who placed second and March Alconar, third.

The nationals also showed the way in cycling's track events at the Amoranto velodrome with Paterno Curtan, many-time SEA Games medalist, winning two gold medals —in the men's 1,600-meter massed start and the 20-km points race.

Other gold medal winners in men's action were Paolo Manapul in the elimination race, Bryan Dimacali in the keirin, Joeffrey Talaver in the 1-km individual time trial, Nilo Estayo in the 800-meter massed start and Alvin Benosa in the 4,800-meter massed start.

RIDERS in the Elite road race, won by RP team mainstay Arnel Quirimit, negotiate an uphill stretch in Batangas.

The women also rose to the occasion with Marita del Rosario clinching two golds in the 600-meter ITT and 1,600-meter massed start.

Mark Bonzo, son of another former Tour champ Romeo Bonzo, grabbed the juniors' 10-km points race in the Air21-backed event that signals the return of velodrome racing in preparation for the country's hosting of the 23rd SEA Games.

Rolando Pagnanawon, another former Tour champion, ruled the Masters' 40-45 age bracket 1,600 massed start, Alex Bilan topped the Executives' 1,600 massed start, Albert Sison dominated the Masters' 51-up 1,600 massed start and Virgilio Valenzuela was fastest in the Masters' 46-50 1,600 massed start.

Rounding out the Elite top 10 in the road event flagged off by Tagaytay Vice Mayor Virgilio Ambion were Ericson Obosa, Lito Atilano, Santy Barnachea, Joel Guillen, Michael Primero and Reynaldo Navarro.

The races also drew trade team members Victor Espiritu, Alfie Catalan and Merculio Ramos, who all aspired for slots in track for the 2005 SEAG national team.

Wrapping up the road events today is the 40-km ITT.

The Open for track and road is a project of the national association for the sport, PhilCycling, headed by Bert Lina.

It is a prelude to the 10th Asian Mountain Bike Championships which Mayor Edward Hagedorn and Puerto Princesa City are hosting beginning this Thursday to Sunday.

RP riders lose ground in 6th lap

TANGUILIG: 11th

THE RP-Pagcor Casino Filipino Trade team grimly struggled to remain fourth overall in the team standings after Stage 6 of the Dji Sam Soe Tour of Indonesia cycling classic which ended in Surabaya Sunday.

Ryan Ariehan spearheaded a 1-2-3 finish by the Indonesian riders in the longest lap of the 1,052-kilometer competition—a flat 234-km run from Madiun to this coastal city.

Ariehan clocked five hours, seven minutes and .01 seconds, a minute and 27 seconds ahead of Nunung Burhanudin of the BTM cycling team and Abdul Rachman of the Polygon Sweet`Nice squad, who placed second and third, respectively, after checking in with the nine-man second pack with identical times of 5:08.28.

The Filipino cyclists, feeling the effects of the sidelining of injured Albert Primero, lost 30 seconds to the Hong Kong team and now trail the third placer by 1:30 minutes overall.

"We really felt the loss of Primero. Nevertheless the boys are still in high spirits and determined to do well in the remaining stages," said Pagcor sports director Louie Carlos.

In the individual race, Rhyan Tanguilig stood 11th overall, Joel Calderon held 17th, Lloyd Reynante 18th and Bernard Luzon, who won stage 3, 40th.

Monday's seventh lap is marked by a steep climb at the halfway mark of the 189.2-km race from Surabaya to Jember, where Carlos said his boys would try to make a move.

Ang, Carpo Bengay badminton tilt champs

TEENER Kelvin Tim Ang completed his romp in the first Bengay Badminton Showdown, beating Ateneo's William Gabuelo, 15-7, 15-12, to win the men's singles crown in the centerpiece Open division at SM Megamall's Atrium, Building A recently.

Ang, a 15-year-old find playing out of PNP-Victor, was only challenged briefly in the second set before clinching the victory worth P15,000. Gabuelo settled for P8,000.

Amanda Carpo captured the ladies' crown with an impressive 11-4, 11-6 win over UP's Sheryl Caraig.

The Manila Polo Club bet also took home the top P15,000 purse staked in the event organized by Bengay and backed by INQUIRER Badminton, Crossover 105.1, Carlton and Sportshouse.

Also grabbing the spotlight were Chester Cordero and Melody Villaceran of The Star, who anchored their respective teams in the doubles.

Cordero teamed up with Nonoy Aguilar of PAF to fashion out a 17-15, 15-10 win over UP's Marlon Villarin and Ben Jonas Garcia.

Villaceran and Marga Tan of Battledore-Yonex fought back from a set down to turn back Carpo and Vanessa Tanco of STI, 7-15, 15-10, 15-6.

In mixed doubles of the Open class, Alex Cuevas of Battledore and Diana Barbo of Meralco came away with a 15-4, 15-3 rout of Nonoy Aguilar of PAF and Monique Buena of Team Kawasaki. Florentino Cruz and Alejandra Enriquez of Malabon repulsed Apolinario Lapena and Gigi Bermejo of Team Kawasaki, 11-15, 15-6, 15-9, to cop the mixed doubles crown in the 40-and-above category.

SPORTSWATCH

Hernaez tops Codiñera chess

SECOND seed Truman Hernaez downed No. 6 Macapagal Paguital in 52 moves of a Pirc Defense in the seventh and final round Saturday to capture the non-master section of the 12th Codiñera Chess Championships at the MCC headquarters at the J&F Divino Building in Quezon City. Hernaez tallied 6.5 points on six wins and a draw to win the top purse of P5,000 in this two-weekend, three-section tournament organized by Metropolitan Chess Club. Half-point behind with 6 points was No. 7 seed Jerome Balico who trounced No. 18 Marlon Ricafort in 40 moves of a Sicilian closed variation. Balico took home P2,500. Tied for third to fifth places with 5.5 points each were No. 8 Allan Macala, No. 9 Leonard Reyes III and No. 3 Lionel Tubianosa. Macala upended No. 10 Raymond Salcedo in 50 moves of a French; Reyes prevailed over No. 32 Primitivo Mamaril Jr. in 56 moves of another Sicilian game while Tubianosa humbled No. 25 Efren Arguelles in 45 moves of a King's Indian Defense game. They shared the pooled cash prize of P3,200.

La Naval junior tennis in Angeles

THE LA Naval Junior Tennis Championships will be held at the Angeles City Tennis Club from Oct. 15-18 in conjunction with the city's month-long Fiestang Kuliat Celebration. The event is sanctioned by the Philippine Tennis Association (Philta) as a group 3 event. It is open for the following age group divisions: Unisex 10-under, 12-under, 14-under, 16-under and 18-under (boys and girls). Tournament supporters are Angeles City Mayor Carmelo Lazatin, Toby's sports Pampanga while Dunlop is the official ball. Club members are willing to house players who wished to stay for the weekend. Deadline for registration is on Oct. 14, at 11 a.m. Entries can be made at Philta Office (525-6434 and 523-6415) and the venue (045) 888-6449) and (045) 322-4348. Look for Ric Manalo or Jun Cuarto.

All eyes on NCA stalwarts Jiao, Araneta

WITH just three more derbies to go in the NCA Stag Wars, all eyes are on NCA stalwarts Boy Jiao and Jorge "Nene" Araneta, who have yet to show signs of slowdown since their win at the first derby on Aug. 31 and Sept. 2 and recently during the Sept. 16 and 20 tilt. Jiao and Araneta lead the 2004 Araneta Coliseum NCA Stagfighter of the Year race with 19 points after three derbies. As the fourth leg revs up, other NCA stars will try to join the winner's circle today and on Oct. 7. The fourth leg 2004 NCA 7-Stag derby series is sponsored by Univet Thunderbird feeds and hosted by Jun Santiago, Ito Ynares and Boy Jiao. Action is slated to begin at 4 p.m.

SALUTE: Rico Salimbagat of the Philippine Army shows off the trophy he won for topping the recent Gwinnette Open chess tournament in Atlanta, Georgia. Salimbagat's US campaign was supported by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya, Army chief Lt. Gen. Efren Abu, retired Rear Adm. Luisito Fernandez, Consul General Angelo Macatangay and Tanauan Mayor Alfredo Corona.

UP sports and physical fitness congress

SPORTS and physical fitness authorities, sports medicine practitioners and physical education experts will be the guest speakers and presenters at the UP College of Human Kinetics' CHK Science Congress (CHKSCI-CON) which will be held from Oct. 25 to 27 at the NISMED-STTC Auditorium in UP Diliman. The Congress, whose theme is "Setting The Bar for Human Movement Professions in the Philippines : Issues and Directions" is aimed at professionals, students, practitioners and interested parties in the sports, fitness and leisure fields. Congress fee for professionals is P1,500 for those who will register on or before Oct. 18 and P2,000 on Oct. 25. The fee for students is half the regular price. For details, contact (632) 929-6033 or e-mail <kineticachk@yahoo.com>.

Life. Play Sports.
August 27,
P100,00

DEADSHOT: Alfie Nobleza, winner of the recent Toby's Sports Mad Range Shootout, receives an oversized replica of his P100,000 check from Toby's Sports operations manager Toby Claudio.

Bold Buddy

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

(Dennis Miranda it was who fouled Mac-Mac Cardona with 2.2 seconds left in that classic FEU-De La Salle title clash for the UAAP crown won by De La Salle. Not Arwind Santos. Sorry about that, folks. To Arwind, the MVP for 2004 UAAP, my apologies.)

***

THE APPLAUSE could not have come at a better time. It was so touching I felt some mist in my eyes. The occasion was the message.

I'm referring to the crowd letting out a hearty cheer on Sunday in response to the speech of PBA Chair Buddy Encarnado during the league's opening ceremonies at the Cubao Big Dome.

"The opening of the 30th season [today] ushers in a new chapter in the colorful page of the league as we pursue our ultimate dream, one that has eluded us for 30 years," said Encarnado. "We will ensure that this time around, the Philippines will make it to the Olympics."

Short. Crisp. Bold. I raise a glass to that, to Buddy.

I've always known Buddy to be a staunch practitioner of the dictum, "There's no better way of handling things than telling it like it is."

I've known Buddy to be always direct to the point. No frills. What you see is what you get.

Now, why did I call his speech bold?

Oh, well, that thing about us going back to Olympic basketball competition is a real head-turner.

When was the last time we were in the Olympiad? Thirty years ago, in the 1972 Munich Olympics. My, how time flies.

I say that was bold of Buddy to say "we will make it to the Olympics" because for us to recapture our slot in the Olympics, we really have to pass through the proverbial eye of the needle.

But wait. There's a ray of hope. In the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Asia will again have two basketball slots. That was the old setup, and Olympic officials have decided to adopt it again beginning in the Beijing Games.

It was even reported that with Beijing as host in 2008, China is assured of an outright berth to the basketball competitions. Which means the remaining countries of Asia will battle not for just one but two basketball slots for the Olympiad.

Now, if we base our performance in the last Asian Games in 2002 Busan, we have a strong chance of nailing one of the two berths in Beijing. Didn't we miss battling for the Busan Games basketball gold by a single basket when a Korean guard fired the winning triple against us at the buzzer?

It was the bitterest basketball defeat ever for us in recent memory but, looking back, that victory, stolen from us by the Koreans, proved one thing. That all is not lost and we can still regain our lost glory in basketball, even on the Olympic level of competition.

Look, had Korea not denied us the win, nobody's too sure anymore if China would proceed to beat us for the basketball gold.

For, as things turned out, didn't Korea defeat China for the basketball gold in Busan?

Had Korea not snatched that win from us, our momentum would have carried us to heights and, with our adrenalin expectedly flowing unabatedly, we might have also turned the tables on the Chinese the way the Koreans did.

Oh, well, that's all water under the bridge now, as the cliché goes.

Anyway, going back to Buddy Encarnado. Said he: "One nation, one mission, one vision, and, God willing, we will be able to achieve our dream."

With China out of the way, plus the fact that two basketball slots are at stake for the Beijing Olympiad, it's a dream not impossible to achieve anymore, Buddy.

Truly, with that as backdrop, the dream of our cagers to, return to the Olympics is as achievable as Taulava's mission to destroy new moves claiming his citizenship papers are tampered with.

I am just wondering, though. With this PBA pronouncement, what happens now to that "super body" in basketball being passionately espoused by some quarters to ease the Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) out of the picture not too long ago?

It's become obviously clear by now that the PBA cannot just say this or that on matters of international commitments without the express approval of the BAP. As things stand now, it's clear as day follows night that the PBA and BAP have started to dance the polka again.

Right, Buddy?

Suzuki zooms with record 262 hits

SEATTLE—Seattle Mariners gold glove outfielder Ichiro Suzuki singled in the eighth inning on Sunday against the Texas Rangers to finish the season with a major league record 262 hits.

The 30-year-old from Japan smashed the 84-year-old record for hits in a season on Friday, passing George Sisler's 1920 mark of 257.

Suzuki's historic hit on Sunday wasn't enough to spark Seattle as South Korea's Park Chan-Ho pitched seven strong innings to lead Texas to a 3-0 win.

Brian Shouse relieved Park in the eighth and surrendered a leadoff single to Suzuki, who finished with 80 multi-hit efforts—the most since division play began in 1969.

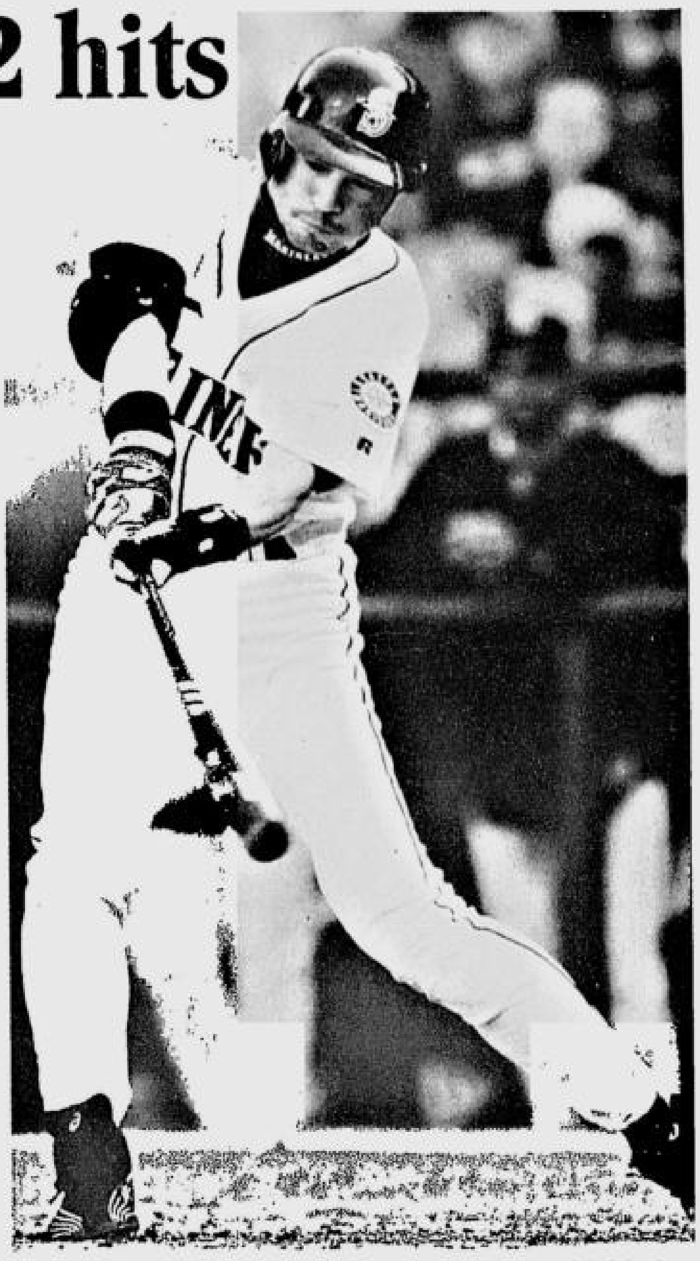
Suzuki's amazing streak has not generated the same attention as other streak chasers in North American. But the same cannot be said in his native Japan where Ichiro fever has consumed baseball fans.

Suzuki is the first player in North America to have 200 or more hits in his first four seasons. He also set marks for singles in a season, finishing with 225. He blasted just eight homers but had 24 doubles.

In the first half of the season, Suzuki registered 119 hits before exploding for 143 since the all-star break.

He batted an amazing .463 in August and .432 in July for the Mariners which finished last place in the American League West Division with a dismal 63-99 record.

AFP



ICHIRO Suzuki singles against the Texas Rangers in the eighth inning for his final hit of the season Sunday. AP

Els snares WGC title, ousts Woods at No. 2

KILKENNY, Ireland—Ernie Els defied the weather and the best Europe's golfers could throw at him to win the seven-million-dollar WGC American Express Championship here on Sunday.

Els carded a final round three-under 69 to finish the tournament 18-under par—one clear of his nearest rival Thomas Bjorn to take the 1.2-million-dollar winner's check.

The victory moved the 34-year-old up to second place in the world rankings, dropping Tiger Woods back to third. It is also the first time in seven years that Woods, who had been the defending champion, does not have a single stroke play title to defend.

Els, who had started the day with a two-shot lead, had vowed to come out and play aggressive golf and he did. A birdie at the first, another at the third kept him atop the leaderboard.

But making sure Els was not going to run away with the championship was playing partner Bjorn.

ELS: Unrelenting form

The Dane, who was close to quitting golf earlier this year as his game suddenly deserted him, proved he was back as he matched Els almost shot for shot.

Three birdies in the first five holes saw him close the gap with Els to only one as the players struggled in the continual rain that forecasters warned was a forerunner of a severe gale that was heading towards the Mount Juliet course.

So worried were organizers about the impending storm that they had brought forward the tee times, started play off the first and 10th tees and sent the leaders out at 10:05 a.m.

Els stretched his lead back to two at the turn when he birdied the 10th but Bjorn struck straight back with a birdie at the short 11th.

It was gripping golf as Bjorn attempted to rein in Els, bidding to win his first WGC stroke play event.

But Els was in unrelenting form, all but sealing the championship when he birdied the 17th to stand on the 18th tee with a two-shot cushion.

"I feel great," said Els. "It was a long tough day but we got the job done. After the ninth hole it became matchplay—a little tussle between Thomas and myself. The other guys were a little too far back to really make a charge." Els admitted it had been vital he won after the bitter disappointment of falling just short at the four Majors this season.

"I had more pressure on me than anyone in the field. After what happened in the summer I needed to get started again and start winning. I think I showed I didn't want to lose today. All in all very rewarding," said the South African.

For Bjorn it was proof that he was finally on the way back.

"I'm proud of what I've done this week. I feel very good about my golf. I got off to a fast start to apply some pressure. Unfortunately for me Ernie got off to a fast start as well but I did all the right things," said the Dane, whose second place netted him 675,000 dollars.

Miserable as the conditions were, it was clear that low scores could be posted.

Former US PGA Champion David Toms went out in a stunning five-under 31 to show what could be done.

But some of the top Europeans chasing Els found themselves running into trouble.

Sergio Garcia came out firing with two straight birdies but then the hard-pushing Spaniard quickly stalled as successive bogeys wiped them out.

Two more birdies and the 24-year-old was back charging but with Els too far in front, third place was the best Garcia could hope for, but even that evaded him.

England's David Howell, playing with Els and Bjorn, secured third spot.

AFP

Tiger to marry model in Caribbean—reports

RIDGETOWN, Barbados—Tiger Woods says he's planning a Caribbean vacation, but in Barbados, reports of an imminent wedding to Swedish model Elin Nordegren are the talk of the island.

Newspapers in Barbados and Ireland have reported that two are to marry early this week at the Sandy Lane luxury resort on the Caribbean island's west coast.

Hotel manager Wilbert Mason said he doesn't know of any plans for a wedding, though two sources told The Associated Press it was planned for Tuesday at the resort.

Fujian lady cagers whip NAASCU side

GAMES TODAY (*Rizal Coliseum*)
2 p.m.—RP Women's Team vs PSCUAA-BSU
4 p.m.—CUSA-PMI vs Metro Star Motor Cycle-Fujian

THE METRO Star Motor Cycle team from Fujian, China blasted the NAASCU selection, 98-57, yesterday in the 2nd PCSO-National Women's Invitational Championship at the Rizal Coliseum.

The Chinese opened the game with a 19-0 run behind Wu Shu Mei, Zheng Xiao Zheng and Zheng Zhoeng and took a 58-19 lead at halftime. The NAASCU quintet's best stand was pulling within 33 points, 81-48.

Games against a selection from the Bulacan State University of the Philippine Schools, Colleges, Universities Athletic Association and the Philippine Maritime Institute, the champion from the Colleges and Universities Sports Association, are also lined up for the Chinese.

Equestrian president Peping Cojuangco made the ceremonial toss assisted by RP women's team manager Jimmy Chan Cuan, Philippine Integrated Chinese Athletic Association president Alvin Tai Lian, Motor Star Motor Cycle's Peter Ty, NAASCU president Dr. Jay Adalem and BAP executive vice president Christian Tan.

The weeklong event is being held under the auspices of the Basketball Association of the Philippines and backed by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Bestank, Burlington, Baker's Fair, YKL Color, Absolute Distilled Water, Healthy Options, Fuji Films and Metro Star Motor Cycle.

OSCAR Freire Gomez jubilates after winning the elite men race of the 2004 UCI road world championships. AFP

Freire wins anew, joins cycling greats

VERONA, Italy—Oscar Freire of Spain joined cycling greats Alfredo Binda of Italy and Belgians Rik Van Steenbergen and Eddy Merckx in the record books on Sunday after winning his third pro world title.

Freire, who won on the same Verona course in 1999 and in Lisbon, Portugal in 2001, became only the fourth professional rider to win three world titles after almost seven hours of racing on a tough circuit around Verona covered 18 times.

He beat Erik Zabel of Germany and Luca Paolini of Italy in a sprint finish with Australians Stuart O'Grady and Allan Davis finishing fourth and fifth, respectively.

"This is a great win but my first win in 1999 was my best ever," Freire said.

However, Freire refused to be compared to Eddy Merckx—the last rider to win three world titles in 1967, 1971 and 1974 and who ruled cycling in the '60s and '70s. *Reuters*

Nepalese cycles world for peace

By Jasmine W. Payo

FOR two weeks now, Nepalese cyclist Phurtemba Sherpa has been pedaling through the busy streets of Manila.

He has already been robbed and challenged to a fight by a drunken man in Ermita, but still asserts that "the people in the Philippines are very nice."

It was an ironic experience for Sherpa, who is on a world cycling tour to spread the message of peace.

"It was okay, there were people who helped me," he said.

It wasn't the first time, though, that Sherpa was attacked. In Cambodia, he was even stabbed in the stomach after being robbed of his bicycle and clothes.

Yet Sherpa remains undaunted and aims to continue cycling around the world for 16 years. The Philippines is his 13th stop in South Asia since leaving Nepal on Dec, 26, 2003.

"Everyday, I cycle for about 10 hours. And people are curious every time they see my bike. I carry a peace flag and I have a plate that says 'World Peace and Environmental Conservation' because these are the important things we should work on," said Sherpa, the second Nepalese attempting to bike around the world after Pushkar Shah.

"A lot of people in Nepal are into cycling. Instead of taking cabs, people there cycle. I want to promote cycling in other countries because it means less pollution. It will help the environment," he noted.

Through his biking expedition, the lean 25-year-old also hopes to raise funds for his village in the province of Shankhuwasava.

He has been receiving donations from the Asian Development Bank, non-government organizations and other private individuals.

"I want to help my countrymen. Most people there are very poor. I want to help build schools and monasteries in the villages and donate money to the handicapped," he said. "I'm happy that every country I've visited has been very supportive."

SHERPA: RP is his 13th stop. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Although the bike tour has been a fun adventure, Sherpa revealed that he also misses his wife and two daughters. "I left my wife when she was six months pregnant. I haven't seen my second child. But I plan to go home to my family every three years. It's difficult but I'm committed to continue my journey," he said.

He confessed that he occasionally gets lonely, but talking to the locals about his country keeps him less homesick.

"Most people don't know a lot about Nepal. They just think about Mt. Everest and that everyone is into mountain climbing," he shared. "But I want people to know that we can do more than climb mountains. We Sherpas can also make a difference."

In-form Trinidad sets sights on Hopkins

NEW YORK—Felix Trinidad, back in his elements after two years of retirement, wants the biggest name out there, Bernard Hopkins.

After Trinidad knocked out Ricardo Mayorga in the eighth round Saturday, he turned his attention to the only man who has beaten him.

Hopkins knocked out Trinidad in the 12th round three years ago for the middleweight title.

3 Filipino netters

... From page A19

Lien Chia Chua earned second-round berths in this event organized by the Philippine Tennis Association and sanctioned by the Asian Tennis Federation.

Chang He demolished Hong Kong's Wong Tze-chun, 6-0, 6-1; Lien won over compatriot Lee Ching-yu, 4-6, 6-0, 5-1, (ret.); Chang CY rallied past local wild card Jandrick de Castro, 4-6, 6-2, 6-1, and Chang CT outplayed Nestor Celstino Jr., 7-6, (1), 6-2.

Other results: Park Soon Seong (SK) d. Michael Basco, 6-1, 6-2; Razlan Rawi (Malaysia) d. Matsuo Yuki (Japan), 6-3, 6-3; Hong Hwi Jin (SK) d. Ko Min-fu (Taiwan), 6-2, 6-3; Andrew Thomas (Australia) d. Zainal Abidin Muhd Ashaa (Malaysia), 6-2, 6-2; Yeo Siang Hak (Malaysia) d. Christian Canlas, 6-4, 6-1.

QUEEN OF THE ROAD: Eduardo Buenavista and Mercedita Manipol receive their trophies and prizes after topping the 8th Adidas Queen of the Road 10K at the Adidas Sports Kamp in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig. From left: Rudy Biscocho, Adidas Phils.' John Alonte, Angelica Suiza, and Goody Custodio.

La Salle golf: Batch '79 pulls 3-peat

SILVER jubilarians Batch 1979 tallied a net 212 Friday to stretch its victory run to a third straight year in the De La Salle-Lipa 3rd Silver Stallion Golf Cup at the Mt. Malarayat Golf and Country Club in Lipa City.

Boycee Arguelles, Ramon Villareal and Lito Marana combined for that 4-under-par effort as the two-time defending champions beat Batch '77 by nine shots in the annual tournament co-presented by Smart Communications Phils. and Batch '79 and sponsored by Spider Security Services and Buenavista Nature Park and Country Club.

Club Malarayat mainstay Pitong Quiocho, also of Batch '74, won low-gross honors with a one-over 73, while Arguelles topped the field in net scoring with a 69.

Monet Mata topped Class A over Villareal, Bernard brown ruled Class B over Dennis Atienza, Levi Agoncillo beat Bryan Mercado to the Class C plum, and Janesse Carr won the ladies division title over Princess Katigbak.

Proceeds of the tournament will go to the Bro. Jaime Hilario Learning Community, the free night school department of De La Salle-Lipa, and other charitable projects of Batch '79.

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1 FAHRENHEIT 9/11
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SM City Cebu Cinema 4
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SM City Dasmariñas Cinema 4
SM City Iloilo Cinema 3
SM City Baguio Cinema 3
SM City Marilao Cinema 4

FAHRENHEIT 9/11 MTRCB Rating PG13
SM City Manila Cinema 11
SM City North Edsa Cinema 5
SM Megamall Cinema 5

MTRCB Rating PG13 **FENG SHUI**
SM City Davao Cinema 3
SM Supercenter Sucat Cinema 4
SM City Cebu Cinema 7
SM City Lucena Cinema 4
SM City Dasmariñas Cinema 1
SM City Marilao Cinema 3
SM City Fairview Cinema 6
SM City Pampanga Cinema 6
SM Tutuban Cinema 3
SM Iloilo Cinema 6
SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 1
SM City Southmall Cinema 7
SM Bacoor Cinema 6
SM Baguio Cinema 2
SM City Manila Cinema 9
SM City North Edsa Cinema 3
SM Megamall Cinema 4
SM Bicutan Cinema 2

RAISING HELEN MTRCB Rating GP
SM City Manila Cinema 2
SM North Edsa Cinema 2
SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 7
SM Southmall Cinema 4
SM City Fairview Cinema 8
SM Supercenter Sucat Cinema 1
SM Megamall Cinema 9
SM Bacoor Cinema 2

MTRCB Rating R13 **RESIDENT EVIL**
SM City Supercenter Sucat Cinema 3
SM City Cebu Cinema 8
SM City Bicutan Cinema 4
SM City Fairview Cinema 4
SM City Tutuban Cinema 1
SM City Davao Cinema 1
SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 3
SM City Southmall Cinema 3
SM Bacoor Cinema 5
SM City Manila Cinema 4
SM City North Edsa Cinema 8
SM Megamall Cinema 10

SECRET WINDOW MTRCB Rating R13
SM City Manila Cinema 6
SM City North Edsa Cinema 6
SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 9
SM City Southmall Cinema 1
SM City Tutuban Cinema 2
SM Sucat Cinema 2
SM Megamall Cinema 5
SM City Fairview Cinema 4

MTRCB Rating: GP **THE TERMINAL**
SM City Fairview Cinema 12
SM City Davao Cinema 5
SM City Lucena Cinema 3
SM City Marilao Cinema 2
SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 4
SM City Southmall Cinema 5
SM Bacoor Cinema 8
SM City Manila Cinema 10
SM City North Edsa Cinema 4
SM Megamall Cinema 8

MTRCB Rating PG 13 **13 GOING ON 30**
SM City Pampanga Cinema 4
SM City Baguio Cinema 1
SM City Lucena Cinema 2
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Pumarens share honors

BROTHERS Franz and Dindo Pumaren will make collegiate basketball history when they share the Coach of the Year award to be given by the UAAP Press Corps today.

The awarding will be held at the weekly PSA Forum at the Manila Pavilion sponsored by Agfa Colors, Red Bull and Pagcor, and aired live over DZSR Sports Radio.

Franz gained the nod of sportswriters who covered the just-concluded 67th UAAP men's basketball season by steering the La Salle Archers to the championship, while the younger Dindo was cited for guiding the lightly regarded UE Warriors to this year's Final Four as a rookie coach.

Mac Cardona, La Salle's heart and soul, is the unanimous choice as finals MVP with sportsman-businessman Terry Capistrano of La Salle picked as manager of the year.

The Press Corps had earlier voted Dindo as coach of the year but the UAAP board said it had earlier decided to automatically give the honor to the coach of the champion team.

Mark breaks 2600

FILIPINO Grandmaster-elect Mark Paragua succeeded in breaking the 2600 barrier for the first time by hurdling Russian IM Alexsander Obukhov Sunday night in the 13th and final round of the 3rd Alushta GMT in Alushta, Ukraine.

Assured of the title as early as the 12th round, Paragua didn't let up and claimed his 10th victim in his last 11 games for a total of 11.0 points and a career-best performance Fide rating of 2726.

His effort gained Paragua an astounding 30.7 rating points for a 2602 Elo total, counting the additions from his World Championship and European chess circuit campaigns and the first two Alushta tournaments.

In the process, Paragua became the first Filipino to breach the 2600 barrier. GM Eugene Torre came closest to hitting the mark when he reached 2580 in 1983.

Whisper tourney

THE WHISPER-SUMMER'S Eve Badminton Cup will be held at Yonex Philippines Badminton Club on Nov. 6-7.

Tournament fee is P600 per player inclusive of tournament shirts, court fees, guest fees, shuttlecocks for the games, meals and entrance to the awards night. The leveling is scheduled on Oct. 23-24.

For inquiries, call 09174298892 or 09178105730, or 817-6514 and 81706532.

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4 GOLD (DTS) THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
5 GOLD (DOLBY) RESIDENT EVIL
6 GOLD (SDDS) RAISING HELEN
7 GOLD (DOLBY) SECRET WINDOW
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4 13 GOING ON 30

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4 (DTS) DODGEBALL

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3 BIKTIMA
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4 BOURNE SUPREMACY
5 FENG SHUI

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2 13 GOING ON 30
3 (DTS) EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
4 (DOLBY) FENG SHUI

Fiesta World Mall
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2 MIND HUNTERS
3 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
4 BANGKOK HAUNTED

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2 WEREWOLF (GINGER SNAP

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Award-winning films from Spain, Latin America in Instituto Cervantes fest

THE 3RD Spanish Film Festival, billed as "Pelikula III" and organized by Instituto Cervantes, is going on until Oct. 17 at Art Film of Greenbelt 1.

The film festival is part of "Fiesta," the month-long Spanish festival of culture and the arts held every October. This year, Instituto Cervantes is showing nine award-winning films from Spain and five from Latin America.

The opening film is "En la Ciudad" (In the City), a portrait of urban life in Barcelona, particularly of a group of friends whose life stories cross paths within a span of three months. The movie is about unexpressed sentiments, hidden relationships, secret lies and indifference. The film boasts of a magnificent script and great performances by Eduard Fernández, who won two awards for best supporting actor from Goya (the Spanish Oscar) and from the Spanish Actors Union, and María Pujalte.

Instituto Cervantes has designated two nights in the festival in honor of Colombia, last night, and Argentina on Oct. 7. The Colombian night will feature "La Primera Noche" (The First Night), whose director, Luis Restrepo, will be in Manila during the festival.

The other films in "Pelikula III" include "Smoking Room," which won the Goya best director awards for Julio Wallovits and Roger Gual; "La caja 507," an action thriller that won awards in four film festivals; "En la Ciudad sin Límites," "Ana y los Otros," "El Viaje de Carol," "Suite Habana."

Also included are the comedies "Días de Fútbol," "800 Balas," "El Caballero de Don Quijote," "El Juego de la Silla" and "El Otro Lado de la Cama."

Moviegoers have the chance to vote for the best film. The winning film will be re-shown to the public on Oct. 16. Voters also have the chance to win tickets for two to Bangkok, courtesy of Lufthansa Airlines.

For more information, call 5261482 to 85, or visit http://manila.cervantes.es.

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ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX
3 Dolby RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE 12:10 pm 2:25 pm 4:40 pm 6:55 pm 9:10 pm
4 SDDS FENG SHUI 11:35 am 1:55 pm 4:15 pm 6:35 pm 8:55 pm
5 dts BOURNE SUPREMACY 12:00 pm 2:15 pm 4:30 pm 6:45 pm 9:00 pm
6 Dolby HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS 11:35 am 1:55 pm 4:15 pm 6:35 pm 8:55 pm
7 Dolby SECRET WINDOW 12:00 pm 2:15 pm 4:30 pm 6:45 pm 9:00 pm
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EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
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ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY, LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	KRISANTA IBA KA
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

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A	TAKAW TINGIN
B	CLOSED
C	

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PREMIERE THEATRE	FAHRENHEIT 9/11

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CINEMA-1	SAVED
CINEMA-2	KRISANTA IBA KA
CINEMA-3	ANACONDAS
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	EXORCIST THE BEGINNING
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	HEAVEN'S POND
CINEMA-6	ALIEN VS PREDATOR
CINEMA-7	KAPAG PALAY NAGING BIGAS (RE-ISSUE)
CINEMA-8	DON'T TEMPT ME (RE-ISSUE)
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	RESIDENT EVIL APOCALYPSE
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	RESIDENT EVIL APOCALYPSE
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	RAISING HELEN
CINEMA-12	SECRET WINDOW
CINEMA-14	BOURNE SUPREMACY
CINEMA-15	FENG SHUI

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PIÑAS)	ANACONDAS
CINEMA-1	FENG SHUI
CINEMA-2	DODGEBALL
CINEMA-4	[illegible]

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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1 RAISING HELEN FS . 10:40 AM, 1:15 PM, 3:50 PM, 6:25 PM LMF . 9:00 PM (GP)
2 RESIDENT EVIL 2 FS : 11:40 AM 1:55 PM, LMF . 4:10 PM (R-13)
ADVANCE SNEAK PREVIEW
HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS (PG-13) 6:25 pm & 9:00 PM
3 SECRET WINDOW FS . 11:55 AM, 2:10 PM, LMF . 4:25 PM (R-13)
4 BOURNE SUPREMACY FS 11:45 AM, 2:00 PM, 4:15 PM LMF : 10:00PM (PG-13)
PREMIERE THEATRE FAHRENHEIT 9/11 FS : 10:30 AM, 1:05 PM, 3:40 PM, 6:15PM, LMF : 9 PM (PG-13)
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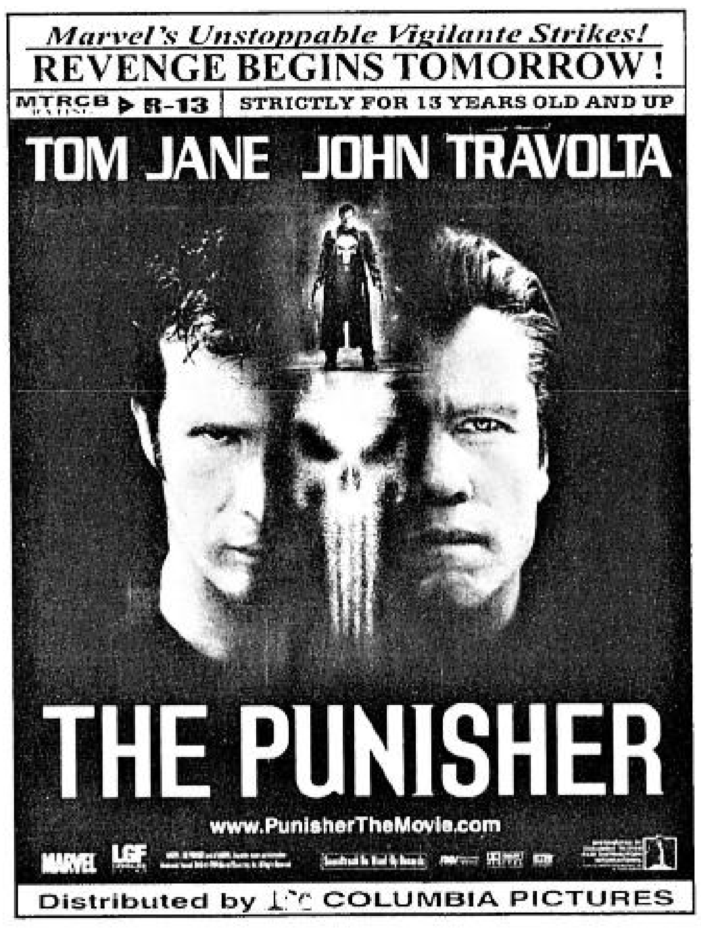
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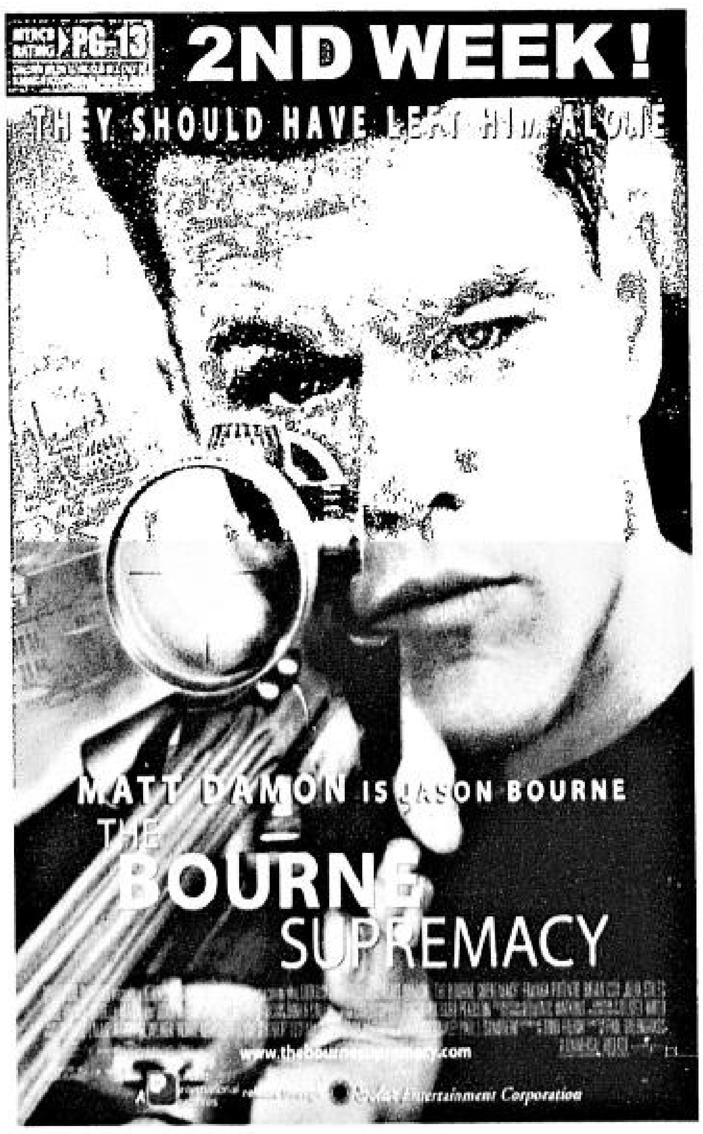
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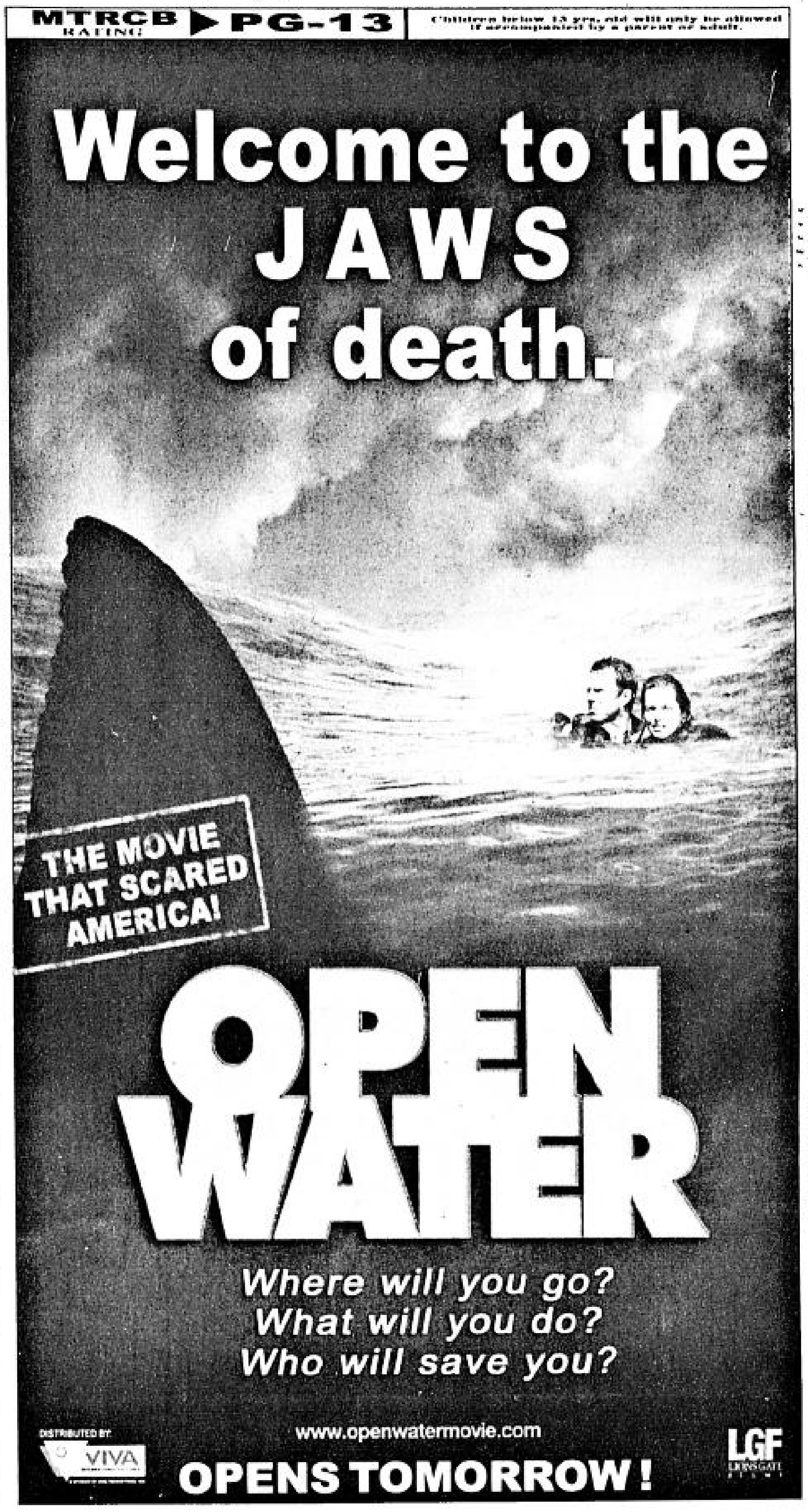
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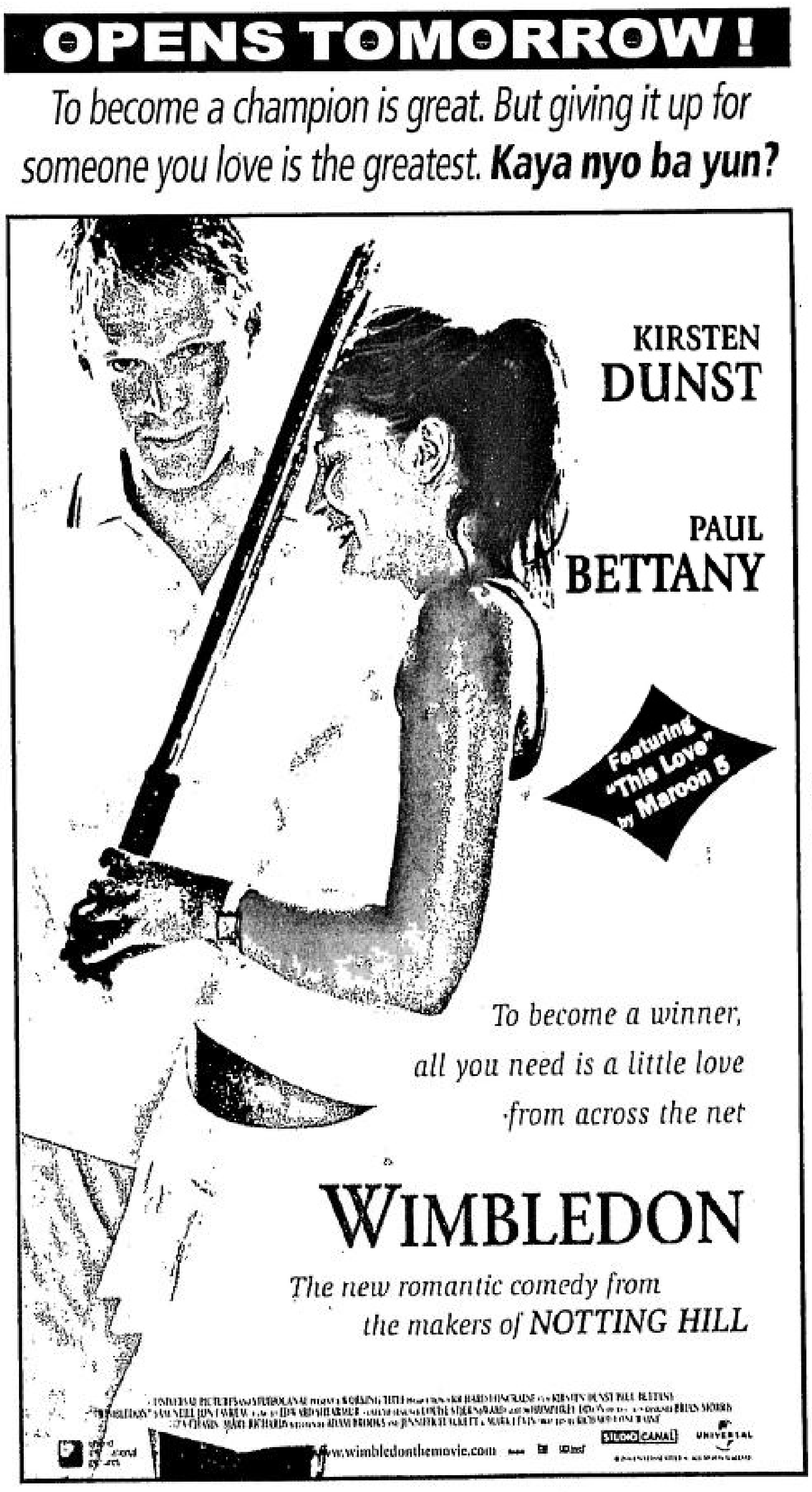
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2 THE NOTEBOOK 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
3 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS Sneak Preview 10:20, 12:40, 3.00, 5.20, 7.40, 10:00
4 SECRET WINDOW 10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
5 RESIDENT EVIL 2 10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
6 RAISING HELEN 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00
7 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10.00
8 FENG SHUI 12:40, 3.00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
9 FAHRENHEIT 9/11 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10 00
10 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10.00
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ERMITA 536-7809 to 12
1 RESIDENT EVIL 2 10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50
2 FAHRENHEIT 9/11 10:10, 12:35, 3:00, 5:25, 7:50, 10:00
3 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY 11:05, 1:05, 3:45, 6.05, 8 20, 10 00
4 RAISING HELEN 10:10, 12:85, 3 00, 5 25, 7 50, 10:00
5 FENG SHUI 10:35, 12:50, 3 05, 5:20 7:35, 9:50
6 SECRET WINDOW 10:30, 12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6 30, 8:30, 10:00
7 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS Sneak Preview 10:35, 12.50, 3:05, 5:20, 7 35, 9.50

METRO EAST 682-8193/99 / 682-8280
1 RAISING HELEN 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00
2 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING 11:20, 1:40, 6:30, 9:00
3 SECRET WINDOW 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
4 THE TERMINAL 11:00, 1:30, 4:00, 6.30, 9.00
5 RESIDENT EVIL 2 11:30, 1:55, 4:20, 6:45, 9:10
6 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS Sneak Preview 10:45, 1:10, 3.45, 6:15, 9:00
7 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY 11.20, 1:40, 4 00, 6:20, 8:40, 10.30
8 FENG SHUI 11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 10:30

NOVALICHES 935-3229 / 31
1 RESIDENT EVIL 2
2 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
3 FENG SHUI
4 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
5 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS Sneak Preview
6 SECRET WINDOW
7 RAISING HELEN
8 SAVED

Citisquare MALABON 288-0985/2575
1 BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
2 FENG SHUI
3 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS Sneak Preview
4 KRISANTA...IBA KA

CAINTA 240-4661
1 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
2 FENG SHUI
3 RAISING HELEN
4 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS Sneak Preview

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4 FENG SHUI
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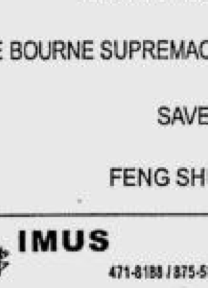
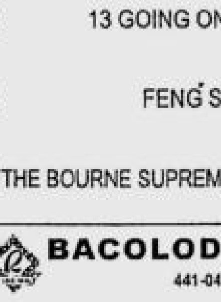
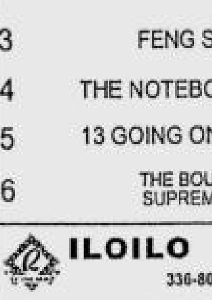
2 RAISING HELEN
3 KRISANTA...IBA KA
4 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
5 FENG SHUI
6 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS Sneak Preview

BACOLOD 441-0458/59
1 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
2 TAG-INIT
3 THE TERMINAL
4 DODGEBALL
5 JANDARA
6 MINDHUNTERS

ILOILO 336-8070/78
1 EXORCIST THE BEGINNING
2 FENG SHUI
3 THE TERMINAL
4 THE TOOL BOX MURDERS
5 TAG-INIT
6 THE NOTEBOOK







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3 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
4 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS
5 SECRET WINDOW

G1 GLORIETTA 1
1 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS
2 RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE
3 RAISING HELEN
4 FENG SHUI

G4 GLORIETTA 4
1 RAISING HELEN
2 FENG SHUI
THX 3 GUARANTEED SEATS THE BOURNE... 1 10, 3 30, 5 50, 8 10, 10 30
4 FAHRENHEIT 9 / 11
5 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS
6 RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE
7 SECRET WINDOW

GB1 GREENBELT 1
1 SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL For inquiries, call 526-1448
2 RAISING HELEN 11 40, 2 10, 4 40, 7 10, 9 40

GB3 GREENBELT 3
THX 1 GUARANTEED SEATS RAISING HELEN 1 20, 3 50, 6 20, 8 50, 11 20
THX 2 GUARANTEED SEATS RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE 2 35, 4 45, 6 55, 9 05, 11 15
3 GUARANTEED SEATS FAHRENHEIT 9 / 11 2 00, 4 30, 7 00, 9 30
4 GUARANTEED SEATS SECRET WINDOW 1 05, 3 10, 5 15, 7 20, 9 25, 11 30
5 GUARANTEED SEATS THE BOURNE SUPREMACY 2 10, 4 30, 6 50, 9 10, 11 30

ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
1 RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE
2 13 GOING ON 30
3 DODGEBALL
4 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
5 FENG SHUI

At the Activity Center
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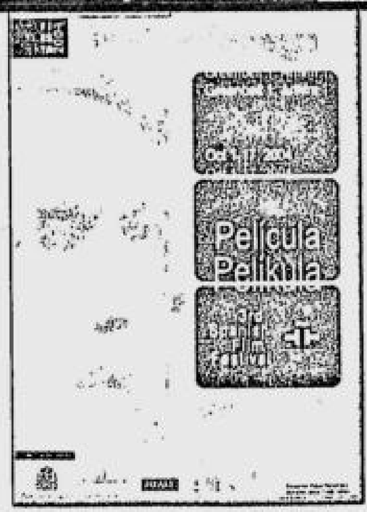
Just present your Shark Tale movie ticket or a P200 new load / re-load Timezone powercard.



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AYALA CENTER ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU Love'Mall!

ENRIQUE Marcos

Enrique launches album

CANDID Records' first Asian male recording artist, Enrique Marcos, will launch his self-titled debut album, "A Collection of Classic Love Songs," on Oct. 14 at 4 p.m. at the Shangri-La Plaza in Mandaluyong City.

It will be a full concert, with musical director and arranger Eric Narvaez at the piano, plus a string quartet.

Enrique will sing cuts from his album including "I Honestly Love You," "You Light Up My Life," "Love Story," Strangers in the Night," "Something," and an upbeat arrangement of "My Funny Valentine." The carrier single is "Beautiful Lady."

The 21-year-old singer will also sing six original love songs composed specially for him by London-based singer and composer Frederic Herrera.

At a very young age, Enrique was a member of his school's choir in Malaybalay, Bukidnon. In high school, he won singing contests all over Mindanao. He lived with his grandfather in Manila where he went to college.

Enrique's love for music intensified while he was living with his grandfather, who had a collection of records by Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Engelbert Humperdinck, Nat King Cole, Johnny Mathis, and many others. Enrique sang at birthday and wedding parties. Frederic Herrera and Vera Isberto discovered him in one such wedding

ENRIQUE/ A25

Mark Anthony needs...

From page A26

the Year, **Juan Sarte III**; Technical Award for Stylist of the Year, **Jenni Epperson**;

Best in Suit, **Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II**; Red Carpet Style, **Tina Maristela-Ocampo**; Bachelor Style, **Borgy Manotoc**; It Girl Style, **Celine Lopez**;

Fashion Photographer of the Year, **Xander Angeles**; Revolutionary Designer of the Year, **Ivarluski Aseron**; Most Stylish Music Video, "Astro" by Radioactive Sago Project;

Male Fashion Model of the Year, **Borgy Manotoc**; Female Fashion Model of the Year, **Isabel Roces**; and Designer of the Year, **Jojie Lloren**.

For feedback, e-mail friends_elpueblo@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com

Dish offers early Halloween treats this October

THIS October, Dish offers treats long before Halloween rolls around.

All Mondays of October are crooner/small "big band" nights, as Dexter brings his new act to Dish. It's a new Dexter as a lounge singer a la Michael Bublé and Jamie Cullum, complete with a three-piece brass section.

On Tuesdays, Oct. 5, 19 and 26, it's musical comedy nights with the Ang Forgettables: Pinky Marquez, Isay Alvarez, Dyords Javier and Bimbo Cerrudo.

Oct. 12 has a special show featuring new recording artist Nicole Joy, with guests Nyoy Volante and Christian Bautista.

It's retro with a bang as the Flintstones perform on Oct. 6, 13 and 20. On Oct. 27, a special Halloween party for a cause will be hosted by Arnel Ignacio. Proceeds from that night will go to Arnel's project of building a permanent bridge for a Quezon City barangay that is perennially hit by floods.

On Oct. 7 and 21 and on Friday, Oct. 15, the Channel 2 show "Born Diva" comes to Dish.

On Oct. 28, Dish, in cooperation with Star Records, presents "Jamming with the Stars" with two bands from the "Gigsounds" CD, Mocha with Spin Art and Pure Instinct, along with surprise Star Records artists.

On Oct. 14, the Kythe Foundation holds a fund-raising show featuring Paolo Santos, Nina, Nyoy Volante and Jimmy Bondoc, for cancer-stricken indigent children. Tickets are P500 each. Call (0915)454-8243.

Oct. 8 has Freestyle and Barbie's Cradle. On Oct. 22, it's acoustic singer Wings Soriano with young belter Michelle Ayalde.

On Oct. 29, Karel Marquez and Lance Raymundo perform back to back.

On Saturday, Oct. 9, it's Wing Soriano again with R & B band K24/7. Oct. 16 features Karel Marquez with Retrospect.

On Oct. 23, Dish regular Akafellas perform with the sultry Jeni Hernandez of "MTB" fame.

And Oct. 30 bring Retrospect and K24/7 in a very special surprise theme night.

Dish is at the ABS-CBN Complex on Mother Ignacia in Quezon City.

Enrique launches...

From page A24

party, where they were among the guests.

With Frederic's help, Enrique's demo of Frederic's song, "Beautiful Girl," found its way to Nieves Bates, the Filipino wife of Alan Bates, owner and president of Candid Records London.

Soon, Enrique found himself flying to London to record his album.

The album launch is sponsored by the British Council, Bergamo, Plaid the Sandwich Bar, Deo B.C. the Salon, VMV Skin and Facial Centre and Spa Lalafca Packaging, and 7-11 Convenient Store, Taft Avenue, Manila.

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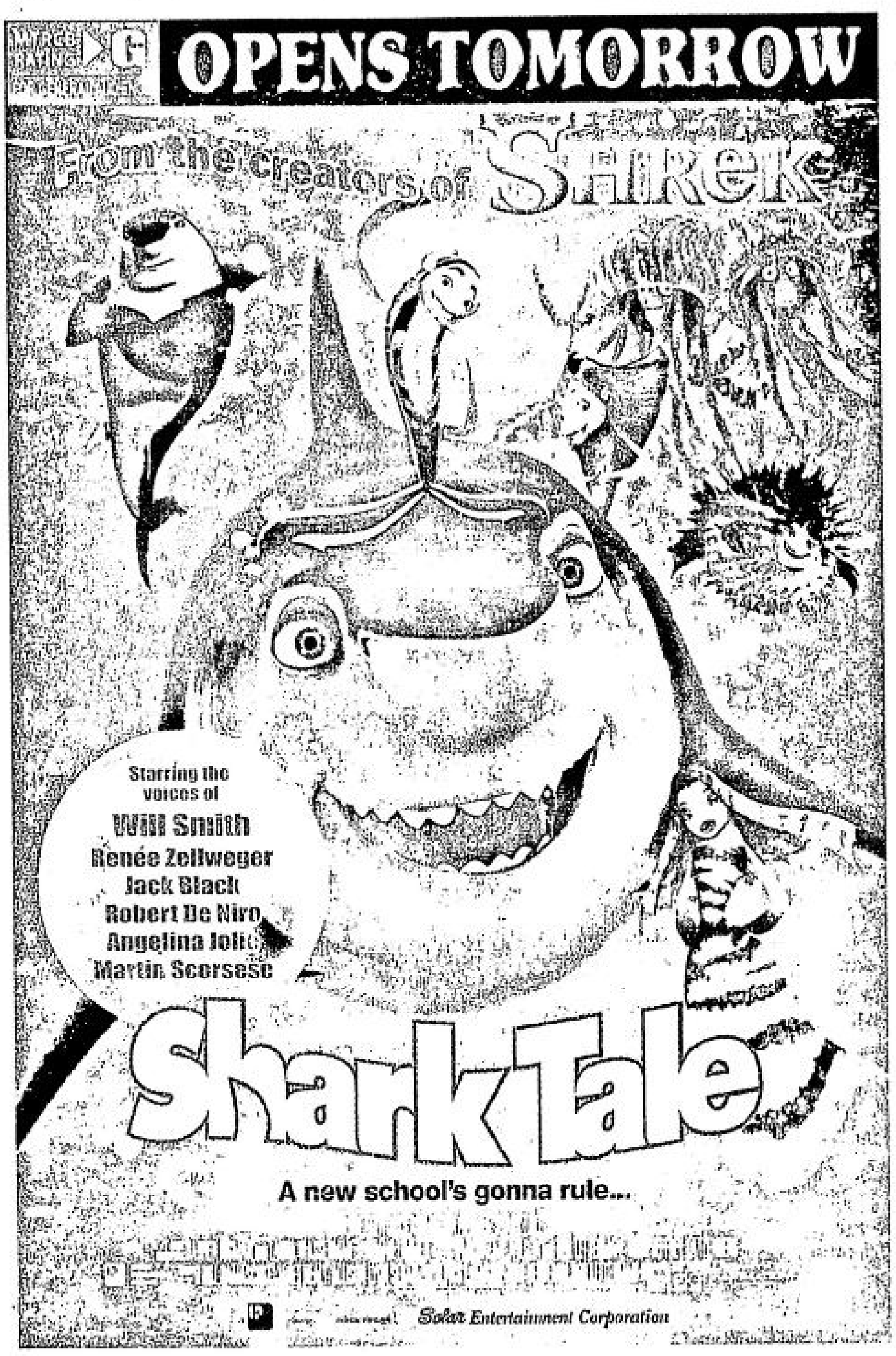
1	BOURNE SUPREMACY 10:45, 1:00, 3:15 5:30, 7:45 PG-13	FLYING DAGGERS 10:20 PM
2	RESIDENT EVIL 2 10:30, 1:00, 3:20, 5:45, 8:10, 11:00 R-13	
3	SECRET WINDOW 10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00 R-13	
4	RAISING HELEN 12:10, 2:55, 5:40 8:25, 11:10 GP	

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

FAHRENHEIT 9/11 PG13 12:00,2:30,5:00,7:30,10:05	RAISING HELEN GP 12:30,3:00,5:30,8:00,10:30	THE BOURNE SUPREMACY PG13 12:40,3:05,5:30,7:55,10:20
RESIDENT EVIL 2 R13 12:35,2:55,5:15,7:35,10:10	SECRET WINDOW R13 1:10,3:20,5:30,7:40,10:00	HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS PG13 12:20,2:45

MATINEE P81, MON. TO FRI., SCREENINGS BEFORE 5:00 PM., FREE SEATING.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Shark Tale
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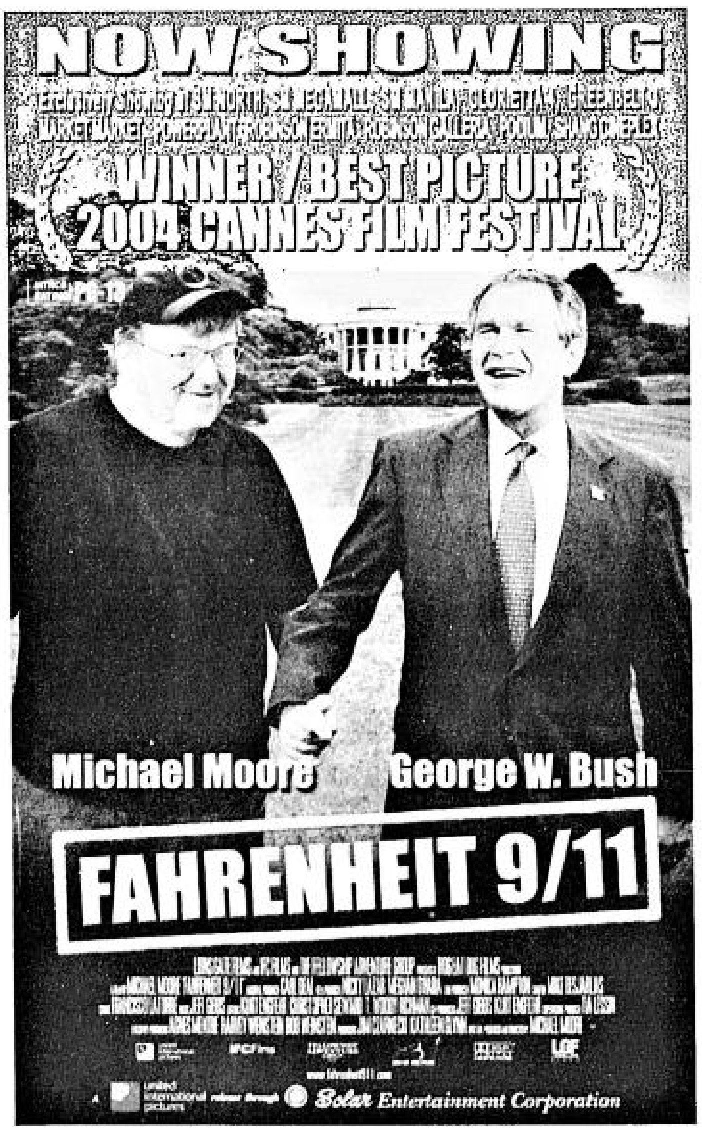
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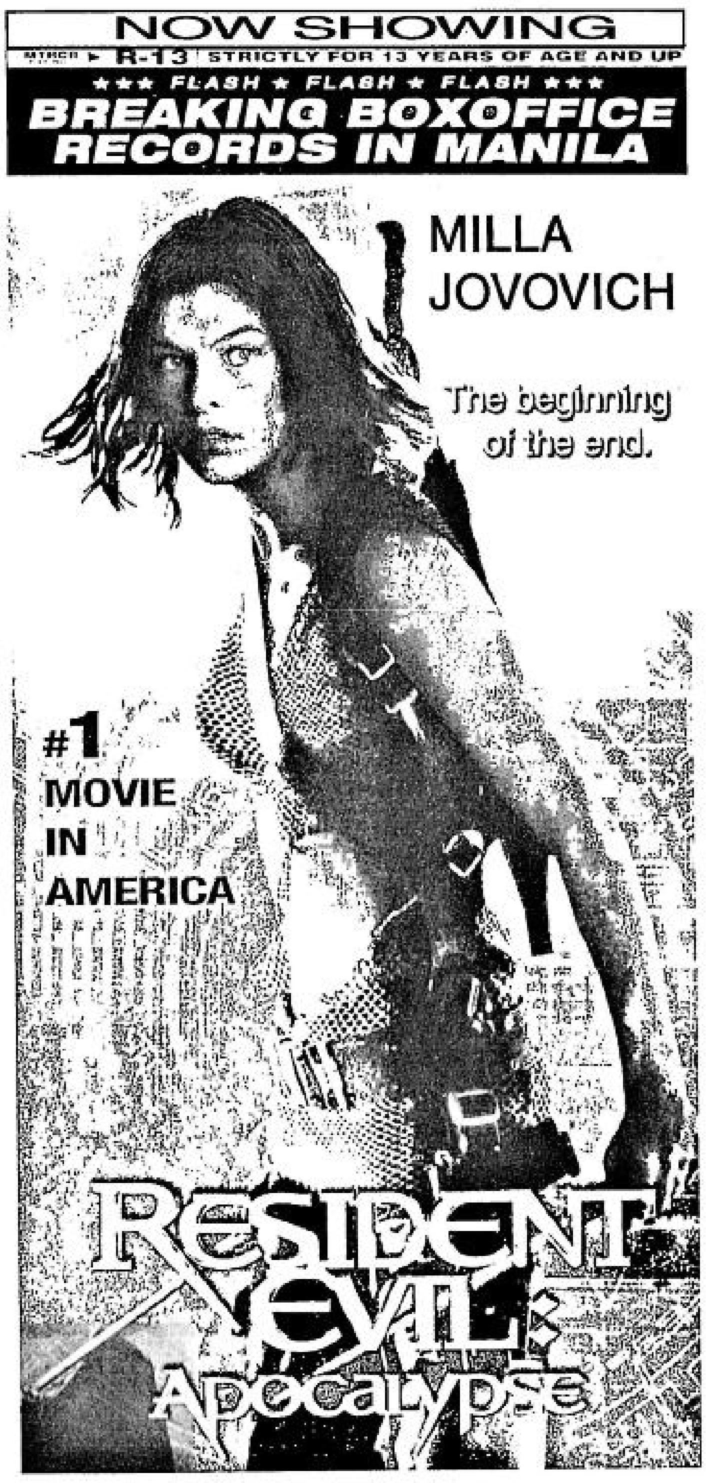
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SAVE THE WORLD 10/13/04

ENTERTAINMENT

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Editor Louie C. Camino

Rio was still thinking of going home, says Gloria

By Nini Valera

RIO prepared her family for her death, says Gloria.

EVEN when things were bad for Rio Diaz, she was still thinking about what she and her sisters would eat while they were in the US.

"She was still worried about what we would eat, like, we had to try the yogurt in this place, the steak in that place," said Rio's older sister Gloria, the actress and former Miss Universe.

Gloria had just arrived from the US last Wednesday when Rio, her youngest sister, took a turn for the worst.

"We've been getting ready for all this," Gloria told INQUIRER Entertainment yesterday, referring to Rio's death on Monday at the Seaton Hospital in Daly City in California.

"When we were there, she was still talking about going home," said Gloria. "There was hope that she could come back and relax. You know Rio, she's a fighter."

Rio was surrounded by the people she loved, her sisters and her husband Charlie Cojuangco, former representative of the 4th district of Negros Occidental, according to Gloria.

"The people who mattered to her were around her," Gloria said.

"Her husband is so loving," she added. "That's why I think she lasted this long."

GLORIA Diaz. "She said she couldn't ask for more, and it was very nice to hear that.

Kids prepared

Rio was diagnosed with colon cancer on Dec. 8, 1998. By the time the cancer was discovered, it was already on the fourth stage.

"Her faith made her strong," Gloria said. "I myself wouldn't have known what to do. I wouldn't have had the strength she had.

"But Rio's just a normal person. Her main concern was always to make people, especially those stricken with cancer, realize that there was still life after cancer. She dedicated her life to people with cancer. She felt she had a mission, and maybe she did, to be around for people with cancer. She encouraged them to go on, to be more prayerful, to keep their hope. And I think she succeeded.

"You cannot imagine the number of people who called me today," Gloria added. "You must be the 500th."

Even Rio's children—Ali, 21, her son by former husband, singer Hajji Alejandro, and Claudia, 9, and Jaime, 7, her children by Charlie Cojuangco, were prepared for Rio's death, according to Gloria.

"She prepared us for it," Gloria confided. "It's sad, very sad. Our whole life changed when she was diagnosed with cancer. We did not know how to deal with it. No one in our family had been sick with a serious illness like cancer. She is our baby sister—we're 12—and she had to be the one to get it. So we all got involved. She always said that she could not ask for more, and it was very nice to hear that."

Bargaining with God

Gloria, who sounded normal on the phone while talking to INQUIRER Entertainment, admitted that she had cried only a little.

"Rio did not want people to cry for her," said Gloria. "I did not cry in front of her. She did not want to see anybody crying. She did not want to be pitied. She always said she knew she was going to die and was luckier than other people who did not know when they would die and could just be hit by a truck one day and fall dead. At least she was prepared already for death."

But Rio, Gloria said, had constantly bargained with God for more time.

"That, I think, was her biggest regret—that she did not have more time with her children and Charlie," said Gloria. "She and Charlie were still on their honeymoon stage. Every day, she prayed for one more day, she was always bargaining with God."

Gloria revealed that like Rio herself, the rest of the family had also undergone the various stages of turmoil after the cancer was diagnosed: denial, anger, acceptance, bargaining.

"We all went through that," said Gloria. "She was not alone in that."

But yesterday, life went on as usual for Gloria.

"I have to go now," she said. "I'm taping today, and there are other people I have to talk to."

Adored by all

The memories of Rio, however, will keep her alive always.

To her former manager and confidante Rene Durian, "knowing Rio and having her as a friend in this lifetime has been the greatest gift I received from God."

Rene considered Rio his anchor, especially when he relocated to Negros about nine years ago.

"She was my family here, and she was so generous, caring and nurturing," said Rene, speaking from Negros. "Everybody loved her, especially her family and the household help. They all adored her."

Rene, who had accompanied Rio to the US for her first cancer treatment at the Stanford Hospital in San Francisco, said Rio no longer wanted him around.

"She did not want me to see her anymore because she knew I couldn't stand those situations," he explained. "She was worried that my blood pressure would shoot up and that I would die ahead of her. When she went into coma, I was hospitalized for two days.

Caretaker syndrome

"People told me it's a caretaker syndrome, where the caretaker became more affected than the patient. It was really worse for the people around her than it was for Rio. Everybody loved her."

Rene said he had been preparing himself already for Rio's death during the past few months. He admitted that he's now happy that his friend's suffering has ceased.

"It would be some sort of a release for her because she was really suffering," he said. "But she was really more worried for her kids and for Charlie."

Up to the end, he said, Rio was still thinking of other people.

Cautionary TV tales

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

AT A RECENT TV seminar, a veteran television person shared some cautionary facts about the medium—or, more properly, about the people who run it in these parts.

First, he informed us that some of our TV channels have become so inured to negative public opinion that some of them have this unofficial policy: They will act on a complaint against one of their shows or talents only if they get at least 100 letters to that effect.

This is a wake-up call to all the well-intentioned complainers and protesters out there: Individual initiatives for reform simply won't cut it anymore. You have to team up with your relatives, friends, classmates, fellow office workers and neighbors, to give your complaint sharper teeth.

Second, TV talents break rules not only on their own initiative, but also because their bosses sometimes egg them on to say something "naughty" or controversial, to boost their show's competitive edge.

Thus, erring TV talents may accept the penalties imposed on them, but they don't really change on a long-term basis, because the need to be "entertainingly naughty" is always there.

Finally, some TV people stoutly maintain that they don't come up with shows that aren't OK for children to watch, because they have children of their own and know what kids shouldn't be exposed to. That's the official line.

Well, do you know that the owners of a channel have prohibited their own children from watching TV until they're 7 years old?

If TV is so safe for kids to watch, why would these TV parents prevent their own little children from "enjoying" it? Clearly, because they know that some shows are not A-OK for vulnerable kids to be exposed to.

What should non-TV parents do? At the very least, take this third story as a really cautionary tale, and consider protecting their own kids in a similar way.

More than that, however, they should clamor for TV reforms (with more than 100 letters, OK?) to really protect their and other people's kids from the medium's more negative influence.

'Himala'

THE MUSICAL version of **Ishmael Bernal's** "Himala" will be staged anew by Tanghalang Pilipino at the CCP's Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino this month. Call 8321125 local 1620 or 1621 for details.

The production stars **May Bayot** as Elsa, **Isay Alvarez**, **Cynthia Culig-Guico** and **Jai Sabas-Aracama**, and is directed by **Soxie Topacio.**

'Saludo Filipino'

"SALUDO Filipino," a ballet concert featuring the choreographic works of **Leonor Orosa-Goquingco**, **Tony Fabella**, **Steve Villaruz** and **Robert Stephen Biadoma**, will be staged at 5 p.m. on Oct. 10 at the Francisco Santiago Hall, PCI Bank Tower 1, Makati City.

Dance numbers include "Mosque Baroque," "Makaugnay," "Anak Dalita," "Maria Clara and the Leper," and "Descent."

Featured performers are the Dance Concert Company, the College of St. Benilde-Filipinescas Dance Company, and the Vella Damian School of Ballet. Call 8784358.

Ragnarok CD

ABS-CBN is boosting "Ragnarok: the Animation," based on one of the most popular online games here, Ragnarok Online.

In addition, ABS-CBN's recording subsidiary, Star Records, will release a Ragnarok sountrack CD single. It will include the Filipino version of the animé series' theme song, "We are the Stars," recorded by the Star Circle Quest Fab Five—**Hero Angeles**, **Sandara Park**, **Joross Gamboa**, **Roxanne Guinoo** and **Melissa Ricks.** There's also a music video showing clips of the animé, and the Questors' performance.

Linda Wang, violin virtuoso

CHINESE-AMERICAN violinist **Linda Wang** is the featured soloist in the second concert of the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra's 2004-2005 concert season.

The "Window of Time" concert will be held at 8 p.m. on Oct. 8 at the CCP's Main Theater. PPO music director **Eugene Castillo** conducts.

Wang debuted with **Zubin Mehta** and the New York Philharmonic at the age of 9, and has since performed throughout the USA and Europe.

For her Manila concert, she will perform **Leonard Bernstein's** "Serenade: After Plato's Symposium" for violin and orchestra.

"Windows of Time" will also feature **Bohuslav Martinu's** "Memorial to Lidice" and **Jean Sibelius'** "Symphony No. 5 in E flat major, op. 82." Call 8321125 local 1800-1806.

Mark Anthony needs all the help he can get

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

NOW that **Mark Anthony Fernandez** is about to be released from drug rehab for the second time, will he be able to stay away from drugs for good?

Recovering junkies are advised to cut ties with their former friends so as not to fall into the drug trap again. But that's easier said than done. You can't end long-standing friendships just like that. It's really up to Mark if he wants kick his drug problem completely. If he wants it badly enough to happen, it will.

Mark happens to be the godson of my mom. He has always struck me as a little boy lost in search of adventure.

I chanced upon him after his first rehab. He seemed to have regained his bearings already although he was still quite edgy. He did a comeback movie, but soon got hooked on drugs again.

Maybe this time around, his dad **Rudy Fernandez** mom **Alma Moreno** should spend more time with him and really find out what's bugging their son. And finding the next **Claudine Barretto** (the biggest love of his life) would surely be a major boost for Mark.

Mark needs all the understanding he can get. I'm sure both his parents want Mark to shape up. He's got the looks, the talent and the resources. What a waste if he blows his chances again.

Plinky's pregnancy

WHILE I was window-shopping, a huge poster of a very preggy **Plinky Recto** caught my attention.

For me, Plinky has one of the most refreshing faces on and off camera. I thought she was just posing as a "mother-to-be" until a gay friend who was with me said that she is really infanticipating.

I can't imagine Plinky with a bulging tummy because I always picture her as the Pilates fitness guru. Then my gay friend asked if I had any idea who the father of Plinky's coming baby is. I snapped back, "Does it matter? She looks happy. That's all that counts. As far as I know her marriage has been annulled so she's entitled to fall for whoever she pleases."

My gay friend, in an *intrigera* mood, said, "Hmmm. A little birdie told me the dad is a cute *bagets*."

I just smiled and left it at that. It's Plinky's

prerogative to keep the identity of the dad a secret, just like **Angelu de Leon** did with the father of her second love child. Some things are better left unsaid but that doesn't mean they're unfelt. The mystery makes it all the more precious.

MTV Style Awards

MANILA'S hottest celebrities and fashionistas flocked to The NBC Tent at Fort Bonifacio last Sept. 28 for the country's first-ever MTV Style Awards.

The "disco-luxe"-themed event honored the country's purveyors of standout style in fashion, music, movies, television, business, sports, and politics in an extravagant show directed by **Robby Carmona** of Saga Events.

Awards were given out in eight people's choice and 12 jury categories. The MTV Style Council, a committee of top fashion editors, journalists, stylists, designers, photographers, and models, assisted by MTV, chose the jury awards.

One of the highlights of the night was a Fearless Fashion award given to trendsetters **Tessa Prieto-Valdes** and **Tim Yap.**

Catch the MTV Style Awards show when it airs on MTV Philippines on Saturday, Oct. 16, at 3 p.m., with replays on Sunday, Oct. 17, at 10 p.m., and Tuesday, Oct. 19, at 8 pm.

The MTV Style Awards Red Carpet Special airs on Monday, Oct. 11 at 7 p.m., with replays on Wednesday, Oct. 13, at 8:30 p.m., and Sunday, Oct. 17, at 9:30 p.m.

The winners of the people's choice awards: Favorite Stylish Leading Lady, Claudine Barretto; Favorite Stylish Leading Man, **Aga Muhlach**; Favorite Stylish Power Player, Female, **Loren Legarda**; Favorite Stylish Power Player, Male, **Mar Roxas**;

Most Influential International Artist, **Britney Spears**; Favorite Stylish Dynamic Duo, **Phoemela Baranda** and **Paolo Bediones**; Favorite MTV Diva-style, **Barbie Almalbis**; and Favorite MTV Rockstyle, **Bamboo Mañalac.**

The winners of the jury awards:

Technical Award for Makeup Artist of

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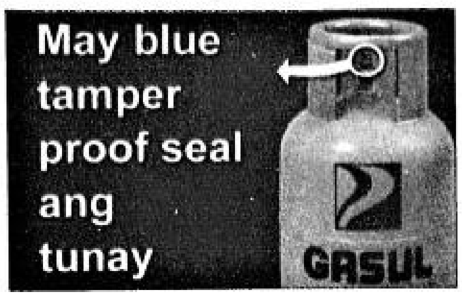
May blue tamper proof seal ang tunay

TUESDAY,
OCTOBER 5, 2004

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

B1

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Stocks surge to highest in 56 months

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE STOCK market surged to its highest in more than four-and-a-half years buoyed by foreign buying and hopes Congress will fast-track the passage of key tax measures before the end of the year, analysts said yesterday.

The 33-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index (Phisix) also recorded its biggest one-day gain in 15 months when it surged 64.35 points to 1,851.60, a 3.6-percent jump for the day.

This was the Phisix's highest close since Feb. 21, 2000, when it hit 1,833.84.

In terms of points gain, the Phisix last spiked by 58.98 points on June 17, 2003, the PSE said.

"The appetite of investors for Philippine stocks is really growing since it was absent in the last few years. Investors are putting their money in stocks given that the government is committed to do reforms necessary to address the fiscal problem," said Alex Pomento, head of research at Macquarie Securities Philippines Inc.

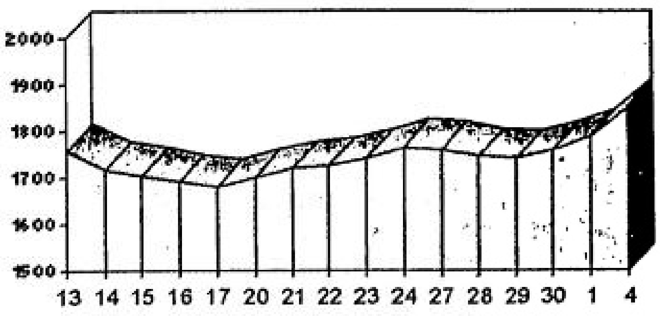
Business groups have seen the resolve of the President in her campaign to solve the country's chronic budgetary woes after she unveiled a package that would generate at least P80 billion in new revenues and P100 billion in savings for the government. Ms Arroyo has reduced to eight the number of tax measures (aimed at broadening the tax base and enhancing tax collection) that she wanted Congress to approve immediately.

These are a shift to a gross income tax system; repealing the value-added tax (VAT) in favor of a more simple system; taxing windfall profits of telecommunication firms; increasing tax revenues from alcohol and tobacco products and from petroleum products; rationalizing fiscal incentives; instituting a targeted tax amnesty, and 'offering a performance-driven system for revenue agencies.

The President had said that while these measures would raise at least P80 billion in additional revenue, this would be matched by savings of up to P100 billion arising from administrative re-

STOCKS/ B3

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



IMF sees RP posting slowest growth in Asean in '05

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund expects the Philippines to post the slowest economic growth and the highest inflation rate among Southeast Asia's emerging markets in 2005, mainly due to escalating oil prices and US interest rates.

In its latest world economic outlook, the IMF further upgraded its gross domestic product (GDP) growth outlook on the country for this year to 5.2 percent from 4.5 percent due to the higher-than-expected output posted in the first semester.

However, the IMF expected the growth to weaken to 4.2 percent next year, partly due to the base year effect of the sharp expansion this year as well as some near-term risks from skyrocketing oil prices.

In Indonesia, GDP growth is seen to improve to 5 percent next year from 4.8 percent this year. In Thailand, GDP is seen to hit 6.4 percent from 6.2 percent.

Malaysia's growth is forecast to grow by 6.3 percent, only a bit slower than the 6.5 percent projected for this year.

GDP, deemed as the single most important indicator of economic performance, measures the amount of goods and services produced by the domestic economy.

In the latest IMF post-program monitoring report released yesterday, the IMF noted that while GDP growth had been robust, the inflation and unemployment rates had been rising.

For next year, the Fund projected that the inflation rate in the Philippines would hit 6.8 percent, while the rates were seen softer in Indonesia (6.5 percent) and even much slower in Thailand (1.8 percent) and Malaysia (2.5 percent).

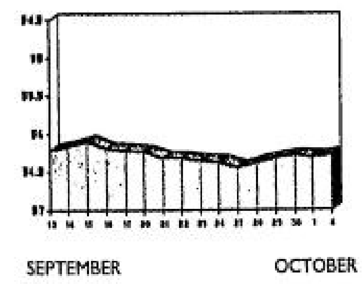
This year, the IMF expected the country's inflation rate to average at 5.4 percent, exceeding the gov-

IMF/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



₱ 56.275 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Oct. 4, 2004

¥ 110.39 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Oct. 1, 2004

GOLD: $411.20-411.70
per ounce Hong Kong, Sept. 30, 2004

October 4, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.806061583	1.000000	56.2710
Japan	Yen	0.007292	0.009047	0.5091
United Kingdom	Pound	1.449702	1.798500	101.2034
Hongkong	Dollar	0.10339	0.128266	7.2177
Switzerland	Franc	0.644591	0.799680	44.9988
Canada	Dollar	0.63892	0.792644	44.6029
Singapore	Dollar	0.479656	0.595061	33.4847
Australia	Dollar	0.583595	0.724008	40.7407
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.138208	2.652661	149.2679
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.214944	0.266660	15.0052
Brunei	Dollar	0.478233	0.593296	33.3854
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000088	0.000109	0.0061
Thailand	Baht	0.019501	0.024193	1.3614
UAE	Dirham	0.219462	0.272264	15.3206
Euro	Euro	1	1.240600	69.8098
Argentina	Peso	0.27049	0.335570	18.8829
Brazil	REAL	0.283525	0.351741	19.7928
Denmark	Kroner	0.134406	0.166744	9.3829
India	Rupee	0.017596	0.021829	1.2283
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212127	0.263165	14.8086
Mexico	New Peso	0.071091	0.088195	4.9628
New Zealand	Dollar	0.542546	0.673083	37.8751
Norway	Kroner	0.120469	0.149454	8.4099
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013606	0.016880	0.9499
South Africa	Rand	0.125066	0.155157	8.7308
Korea	Won	0.000701	0.000870	0.0490
Sweden	Kroner	0.110887	0.137567	7.7410
Syria	Pound	0.015591	0.019342	1.0884
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.02389	0.029638	1.6678
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000421	0.000522	0.0294

INTEREST RATES

October 4, 2004-MART1

Rates Benchmark Interest Rates	MART 1 4-Oct-04	MART 1 1-Oct-04
1 Month	8.1385	8.0839
3 Months	8.2188	8.1617
6 Months	8.9643	8.9583
1 Year	9.9558	9.9518
2 Years	10.7192	10.7133
3 Years	11.4089	11.415
4 Years	11.8288	11.8283
5 Years	12.2192	12.2217
7 Years	13.025	13.03
10 Years	13.3589	13.3567
20 Years	13.6732	13.675
25 Years	13.9769	14.0125

Oil firms seen raising diesel price by ₱2/liter

By Abigail L. Ho

AS world oil prices continue to soar, local oil companies may have no choice but to again jack up diesel prices by about P2.08 a liter in the next two weeks.

Raul Concepcion of the Consumer and Oil Price Watch said finished product importers had been having a difficult time keeping the pump price of diesel at the current level as international prices showed no sign of letting up.

As of Oct. 1, the price of diesel, based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products, surged to $56.18 a barrel from only $31.63 a barrel in the same period last year.

MOPS-based diesel posted a September average of $54.29 a barrel after registering a record-breaking $56.68 a barrel last Sept. 30. The September average was more than $2 higher than the August average of $51.66 a liter.

Some oil firms had, in fact, given up on shouldering the rising costs of diesel in the world market.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez yesterday revealed that new player Eastern Petroleum Corp. had jacked up diesel prices by 75 centavos a liter.

Eastern Petroleum officials declined to confirm this.

But, just the same, Perez said a major oil player recently expressed its intention to increase diesel prices by 80 centavos a liter. He did not name the company.

So far, oil refiners Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., and finished product importers Total (Philippines) Corp. and Flying V, had said they still had no instruction from their respective management regarding price adjustments.

Seaoil last night raised its diesel price by 75 centavos. Sources said Flying V was also planning to increase its prices.

Other oil players Caltex Philippines Inc. and Unioil Petroleum Philippines Inc. did not comment.

Even as world diesel prices continued to climb, Concepcion said there was still a chance for a rollback in pump prices of around 11 centavos a liter, at least for the country's two oil refiners.

For unleaded gasoline, he said, price rollbacks could come in the next two to three weeks, even though world prices were expected to remain quite high.

The oil refiners, he said, could implement a price reduction of P1.65 a liter, while the new players could effect a rollback of P1.72 a liter.

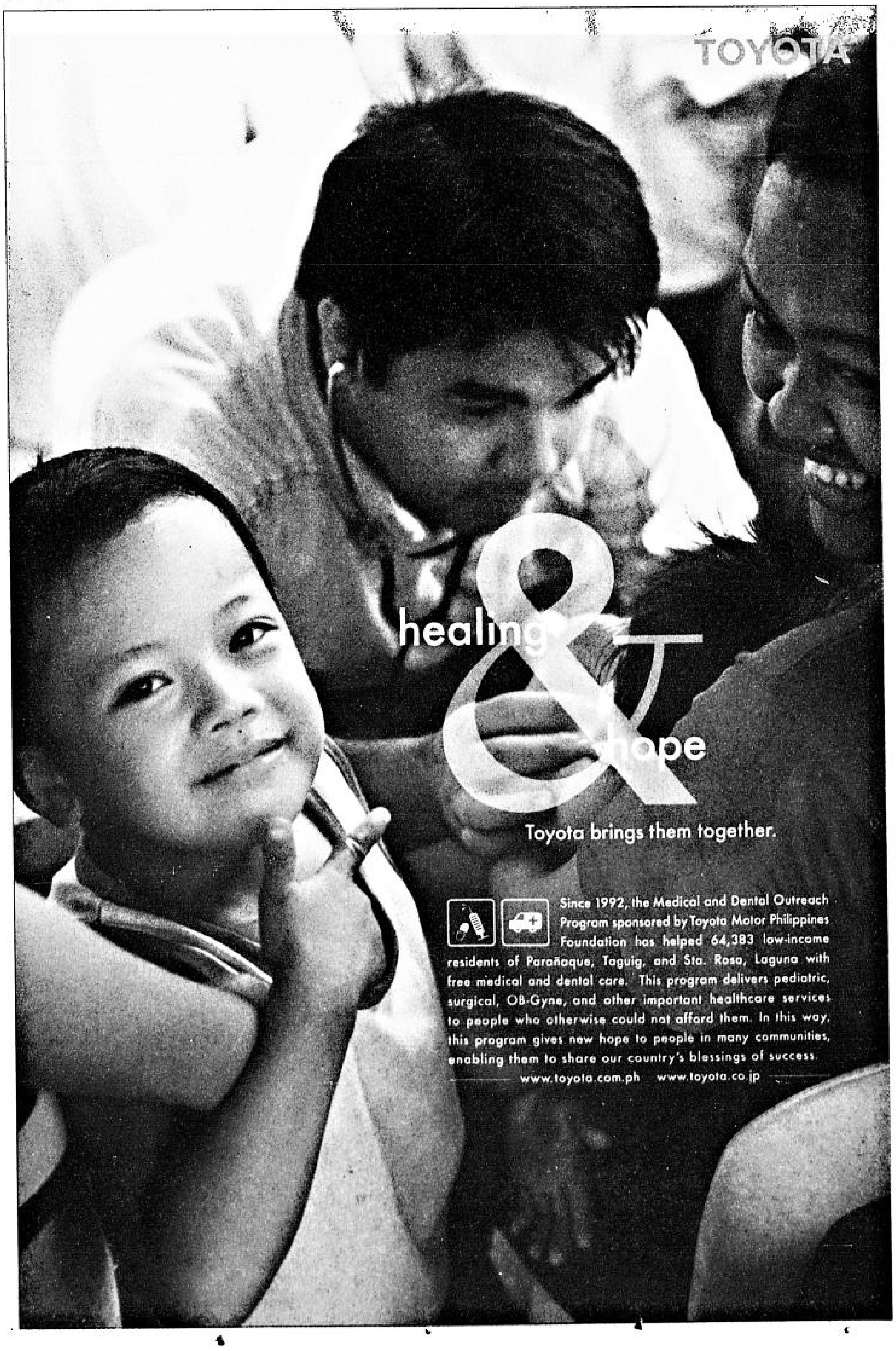
MOPS-based unleaded gasoline had begun to soften last month, registering a September average of $49.04 a barrel from $51.50 in August.

Despite this, Perez said world oil prices would continue to be high up to the end of the year.

International oil prices usually spike in the last quarter of the year due to increased demand brought on by the winter season.

Other factors that contributed to the rise in world oil prices include the rebel threats against Nigeria, production losses in the Gulf of Mexico because of Hurricane Ivan, the continued uncertain state of Russian oil giant Yukos, the persistent terrorist threats on Iraq and the huge Chinese and American demand.

As a result, Perez said nothing could be done to stop local pump prices from following the world trend. The best that the government could do was continue pushing the development of alternative fuel sources.



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Seen taxes

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

SOMETHING strange is definitely going on in this poor country under this disorderly cute administration of Gloriaetta.

She declared not too long ago that we were already in a state of crisis—the "fiscal" kind. This word, as far as I can see, refers to the government exclusively.

Again, that's the government. Its finances are in a mess.

And so, whoever did such a terrible damage to government finances deserves to face a firing squad of the public's yellow spittle.

But as far as I can remember, the government wields all the power in this country. It has complete control over its finances, and nobody else.

So now, who is responsible for the fiscal crisis? Simple, my dear dimple, like a confirmed masochist, the government did the fiscal mess upon itself.

Yet this cute administration talks on and on about the crisis, as if it is just trying its best to tell the whole world that we are in deep sh... *este*, trouble.

It's as if this broke cute administration has nothing to do with the fiscal crisis whatsoever. Strange but true!

* * *

TO solve the crisis, this cute administration is pushing for new tax measures in Congress. Among them are the so-called sin taxes.

Now, as far as I can examine my conscience, anything that has something to do with "sin" belongs to the sphere of people like priests and bishops. You know—religion!

But now it seems that "sin"—or more accurately, the deterrence to committing sin—is also the concern of government policy.

For that's the core of "sin" taxes. In a way, the government imposes stiff taxes on "sin" products to lead us not into temptation.

But only if you are ... well, poor!

For whatever tax rates which the government slaps on "sin," those who have the money can always afford to sin.

By exacting heavy taxes on "vices," in effect, the government is acting as our moral guardian. This used to be the job of priests and bishops.

Since the government must step into the bounds of morality, priests and bishops stick their noses into state affairs, such as corruption over jueteng. Even now! (*Bawi na!*)

* * *

MORE and more we see all sorts of religious groups, and not only the Catholic Church, exerting influence over the government.

They now even dictate the outcome of elections.

But anyway, I thought that the move for higher taxes on cigarettes, beer and liquor, is actually a means to raise money to avoid a fiscal catastrophe.

It has nothing to do with moral issues; it is not in the same league as condom and pornography.

Still, rather than increase the tax on necessities like food, text and sex, this cute administration prefers to tax "sin" products to raise revenue.

So somebody please tell me, what does this cute administration really want? Does it want to raise money, period? Or does it want to turn us into saints?

Those two goals, if you ask me, run right smack against each other.

They say that if they increase the taxes on "sin" products to raise revenues, they are also supposedly trying to discourage "sin," at the same time.

But if you discourage "sin," by imposing stiff taxes on the "sin" products, whether seen or unseen, how can you expect to raise more revenue? Beats me too!

* * *

TO top it all, this cute administration is finally doing something about the mounting losses of the so-called GOCCs, the government owned and controlled corporations.

Malacañang is putting a stop to the bleeding with the use of the most powerful management tool: It has threatened the executives of the GOCCs with dismissal.

The GOCCs better shape up or else their executives must face the ax, said the headlines yesterday, quoting none other than Malacañang.

In a private business, as far as I can tell, such things are a ... well, "given." You don't need to issue threats of dismissal. It goes without saying. It is already understood!

In fact, in a private corporation, they use the ax, and they use it mercilessly, so that the business will shape up.

For this cute administration, it's the other way around. Why? Well, the use of threat and ultimatum can bring a lot of media value.

* * *

ANYWAY, the point is that recent history already showed us that "sin" taxes do not necessarily achieve their supposed objectives.

In 1997, the administration of Kuya Eddie conducted the famous shift in the excise tax on beer, liquor and cigarettes, from ad valorem to specific.

For the sake of guys in the Senate called Lito and Bong, "specific tax" is an absolute peso amount. You pay P1 tax for sneezing on your seatmate. That's specific.

But "ad valorem tax" is a percentage of the selling price, whether retail or wholesale or whatever. Your seatmate pays 20 percent tax for hitting you in the nose.

In effect, under an ad valorem system, the tax automatically goes up, as the price of the commodity goes up.

In 1997, thanks to the lobby of a certain foreign cigarette company, the administration of Kuya Eddie went for the switch from ad valorem to specific.

That's the only reason why, today, this cute administration is moving heaven and earth in Congress to raise the specific tax on "sin" products.

Being a fixed amount in peso terms, the excise tax on those products failed to catch up with inflation.

Yet even at that time, some people already warned that, because of the shift to specific tax, the government could expect to lose revenues in the long run.

For one, it would need another approval from Congress to raise the specific tax, even just to catch up with inflation.

As everybody knows, getting any tax measure through Congress, any measure at all, is even harder than for Jose Pidal to pass through the eye of the needle.

It shows now. Congress is laying the tax measures of this cute administration as hostage for pork barrel.

Did the shift discourage us from sinning? Also, did it raise more revenue?

Official data show that government revenue from tobacco products went down the past few years since that famous shift, despite an increase in consumption.

I rest my case.

NTC collects ₱700M in telco fees

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co., Globe Telecom Inc. and Smart Communications Inc. topped the National Telecommunications Commission's list of those that beat the Sept. 30 deadline for payment of regulatory fees.

But PLDT subsidiary Pilipino Telephone Corp. continued to defy the NTC and was not in the Commission's positive list. The NTC had warned that failure to settle the regulatory fees on time would force it to impose fines and penalties that could include suspension or even revocation of authorities and licenses.

Piltel has an outstanding balance of P1.3 billion in regulatory fees since 1997, of which about P24 million would have been for this year.

Phone, broadcast networks and cable companies must pay the NTC yearly a regulatory fee computed at 50 centavos for every P100 of paid capital.

Some covered entities like Piltel questioned the NTC's computation of regulatory fees and thus, refused to pay their outstanding dues. But the Commission, in an order issued last week, stood by its computation.

The NTC said it collected P783.2 million in regulatory fees last week from 290 broadcast networks and 56 radio and phone operators. Previously, the commission had collected P520 million.

More than P720 million of the total collection on the due date came from telecom firms, based on the NTC data.

PLDT paid P234.5 million followed by fierce rival Globe with P156.1 million. PLDT subsidiary Smart Communications Inc. settled P121.6 million in regulatory dues.

Among the television giants, ABS-CBN paid the highest with P7.4 million followed by GMA Network Inc. with P5.3 million, ABC 5 with P3.5 million and Manila Broadcasting Co. with P2 million.

Central Cable TV of the Lopez group topped the NTC list on cable companies with P4.6 million in regulatory fees.

The NTC had ordered all its covered companies to comply with the Commission order or be slapped a 50-percent penalty on unpaid fees 60 days after Sept. 30. After that, the penalty shall be increased to by one percent for every month of delinquency.

As of the first half, the NTC had earned P488 million. It is expected to contribute close to P1 billion to state coffers by yearend.

IMF sees RP posting . . .

From page B1

ernment's 4 to 5 percent official target.

Indonesia's inflation rate was seen. higher at 6.5 percent this year, but Malaysia and Thailand were expected to post 2.2 percent and 2.7 percent, respectively.

The IMF report indicated that one source of risk was that US inflation or growth would rise higher than expected, which may prompt a sharper tightening by the US Federal Reserve and destabilize the global financial markets.

"In this environment, risk aversion would arise, with even more serious consequences for emerging markets such as the Philippines with weaker fundamentals," the IMF report said.

Even without such an event, the report noted the Philippines had already been warned of credit rating downgrades if the new administration would not proceed with bold fiscal reforms.

"While the domestic economy has weathered the effects of higher oil prices to date, additional increases going forward could weaken growth and further increase inflation," the report said.

But the same report said the country appeared less vulnerable to a possible "hard landing" in China, since its exports to the country were largely inputs for processing and re-export and thus were not closely linked to the strength of Chinese domestic demand.

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- OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND: TURBULENCE NOTWITHSTANDING
- CREATING A BUILT-TO-LAST FIRM
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- "WRAP-UP AND NEXT STEPS: Identify the Critical Few Objectives of the Executive Team"

Other Speakers

Mr. ERRAMON I. ABOITIZ
EVP and COO, Aboitiz Equity Ventures

Mr. JOAQUIN L. ARAMBULO
Business Productivity Advisor, Microsoft Philippines

Dr. FRANKLIN C. ASHBY, Author of "Embracing Excellence" and the soon to be released "Back on Track" (USA)

Mr. HENRY T. CO
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Mr. RICO HIZON
Broadcaster, British Broadcasting Corporation (Singapore)

Mr. ANUPAM PRAKASH
Asia Pacific Global Sourcing Leader
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President and CEO, Jollibee Foods Corporation

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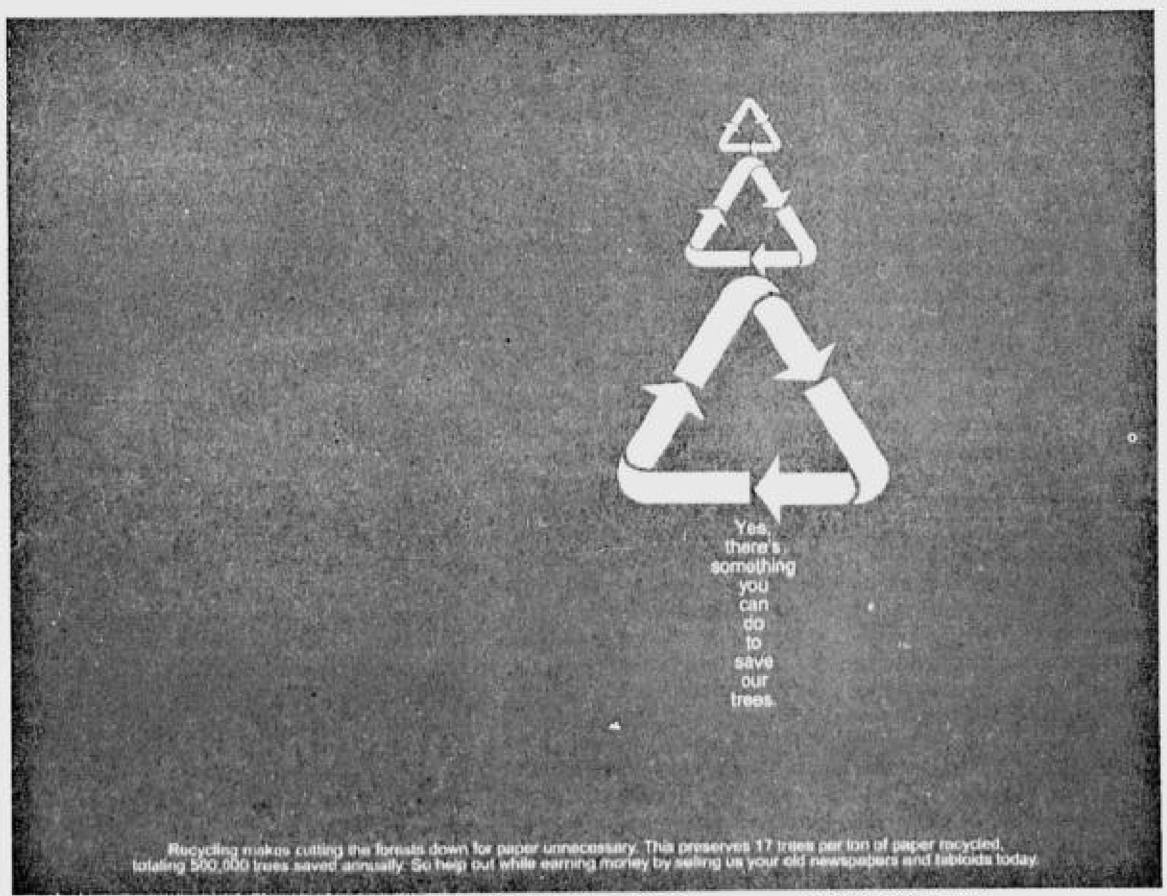
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(As of October 4, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	22,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	18	19	17.75	19	1,389,300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	46	48	46	48	3,738,200
China Banking Corp.	530	530	530	530	4,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	44	44	44	44	33,300
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.44	0.46	0.42	0.45	1,240,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	28	29	28	28.5	757,800
Philippine National Bank	23	23	23	23	15,500
Phil. Savings Bank	27	27.5	27	27.5	46,000
Security Bank Corp.	21	21.25	20.25	21.25	61,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	24	24.25	24	24.25	126,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2440	2470	2440	2470	550
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	124,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	116	116	116	116	100
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1680	1700	1680	1685	650
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	23	24	22.5	24	247,300
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.02	1.18	1	1.16	66,180,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1125	1180	1125	1175	30,360
Ipeople Inc.	1.74	1.76	1.7	1.76	192,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	20,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.75	2.9	2.7	2.9	16,141,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	110,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1450	1470	1450	1465	196,040
Ivantage Corp.	0.66	0.69	0.66	0.68	5,720,000
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	22,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	16	17	16	17	115,500
Manila Electric Co. B	24.75	26	24.75	25.5	2,438,300
Petron Corp.	2.95	3.05	2.95	3	9,883,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.1	1.1	1.08	1.08	445,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.46	1.5	1.46	1.48	413,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	230,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	5.1	5.5	5.1	5.4	4,241,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	200,000
Union Cement Corp.	2.5	2.65	2.5	2.65	9,621,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	5,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	29	30.5	29	30	221,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	27	27	26.5	27	252,500
RFM Corp.	0.75	0.79	0.75	0.76	570,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57.5	58	26,900
San Miguel Corp. B	70.5	71	70.5	71	390,700
Universal Robina Corp.	9.2	9.2	9.2	9.2	55,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0046	0.0046	0.0044	0.0046	28,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	20,000,000
Ayala Corp.	6.5	6.7	6.4	6.6	14,825,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	10,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.4	3.45	3.4	3.4	610,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.031	0.033	0.031	0.032	13,300,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.4	653,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.0065	12,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.18	0.185	0.18	0.185	100,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	20,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1	1	1	1	10,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	16	16	16	16	50,800
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.115	0.105	0.115	1,300,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.58	0.61	0.58	0.6	28,010,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	730,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.26	2,580,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	700,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.3	2.36	2.28	2.3	14,838,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.036	0.037	0.036	0.036	10,700,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	10,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	27.5	28.5	27.5	28.5	1,357,100
Global Equities Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.07	0.07	1,500,000
Ionics Inc.	1.96	2.02	1.96	1.98	528,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.86	1.96	1.86	1.96	527,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.52	1.54	165,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.28	1.32	1.28	1.32	11,302,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.57	0.6	0.57	0.58	185,490,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	200,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.17	0.18	0.17	0.175	14,560,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.205	0.21	0.205	0.21	11,160,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.74	1.78	1.74	1.76	350,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.065	0.065	0.0625	0.0625	2,100,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.14	0.15	0.14	0.14	90,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.68	0.7	0.68	0.69	7,420,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	190,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	100,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	117,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-Cbn Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	22.75	24.25	22.75	24.25	841,600
ATS Corp. - Preferred	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	10,000
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.2	25,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.7	7.1	6.7	7.1	15,343,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	210,000
Cityland Development Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	200,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	10,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.46	0.48	0.44	0.45	38,880,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.14	0.15	0.135	0.135	1,610,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	100,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.35	0.38	0.35	0.37	43,970,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.2	1.24	1.18	1.22	40,576,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.225	0.23	0.225	0.225	4,020,000
City & Land Developers	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	8,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.44	0.48	0.44	0.45	3,970,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2	2.08	2	2.08	633,000
SM Development Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	210,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.7	7.1	6.7	7	31,563,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	21,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	3	3	3	3	167,000
Benguet Corp. A	1.3	1.42	1.3	1.4	132,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.225	0.23	0.225	0.23	6,480,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.29	0.31	0.29	0.3	9,240,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.017	0.016	0.017	221,600,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.02	97,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0065	0.007	0.0065	0.0065	358,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.028	0.033	0.028	0.032	19,300,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.39	0.42	0.39	0.42	3,010,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.43	0.45	0.43	0.45	1,950,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	500,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	24,500,000
Interport Res.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	20,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	20,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	10,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	100,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	9,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.65	88,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.033	0.034	0.033	0.034	5,900,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	10,000

Bearbull finds two winners

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

THERE is a time to be funny and a time to be serious. This week, with the Phisix hitting a 4-1/2 year high, I dedicated myself to finding stocks that still appear to have prospect of good capital appreciation. I concentrated on stocks standing below their high for the year, no easy task.

They both originate from the sale by Bacnotan Consolidated Industries (BCI), and its unit Atlas Cement Corp., of its 51-percent holdings in Union Cement Holdings Corp., an unlisted company for $214 million. BCI sold its shares for P23.83 a share, a huge premium over its book value of P9.98. The sale was made to Cemco, which is 40-percent owned by Holcim (Switzerland).

Holcim (US) is one of the world's largest producers of cement, concrete and aggregates and has factories in 70 countries. Last year, it had a net income of $552 million, 51 percent higher than in the previous year, and it employs 48,000 workers worldwide. It is an acknowledged leader in building technology. BCI said the offer was "fair and attractive" given Cemco Holdings' technology, market reach, and capital resources. "It was critical to have the most competitive and consolidated supply sources, sufficient capital and the best technology in order to compete in global markets."

As a result of the sale, BCI reaped a cash windfall and decided to reward shareholders with two dividends, each of P9 a share. One has already been paid 20 days ahead of time and the share price was adjusted from P24 to P15. The remaining P9 will be paid next March and, in theory, the share price should fall to P6. However, even after deducting the dividends of P18, the shares will still have net assets of P34 a share.

I cannot see the shares standing at roughly one-sixth of their book value. This is a great asset play and I would be surprised if by next March, the shares, ex-all, do not stand at P10 or more. The only problem is liquidity. It is difficult to buy shares at P15 but as there is no hurry, you should place an order to accumulate for the rest of the year.

The more interesting stock is Union Cement Corp. (UCC), which is reasonably liquid. The book value is P2.38, but remembering the huge premium paid for the holding company, the shares were assigned a fair value of P6 a share. I have checked this out meticulously and the exact figure is P6.03. Various institutions, which are aware of this, are trying to get Cemco to buy their shares for P6 under the Tender Offer Act, but as they acquired the shares, indirectly, I do not think that the Act applies. Morally and ethically, they have a good case.

So let us look at UCC—past and present. Last year, the construction industry was in the doldrums and China was dumping cement in large quantities, much to the despair of the cement manufacturers who were losing money. But now everything has turned around. Because of China's booming economy, growing at 9 percent annually, the country has mounted a huge infrastructure program to link towns, which are hundreds of miles apart. China now needs for itself all the cement it can produce and is now an importer. The price of a bag of cement has increased from P127 to P135.

For UCC, this represents a reversal of fortune. A loss of P290 million in the first half of 2003 has been converted into a profit of P396 million in 2004. The company's cash flow has multiplied five-fold from P430 million to P1.92 billion. The construction industry is picking up. Office space that has been lying vacant is suddenly being rented for call centers, an industry of the future. Building of low-cost housing is booming and only last week, Filinvest Land (FLI) announced that its sales for the first 8 months of the year had almost doubled. All the other house-building companies such as ELI, MEG, LND and CMP are at their high for the year.

In December, UCC is going to change its name to Holcim (Philippines), and its investment status will be revised upwards. With the most advanced technology, a plentiful supply of capital and the ability to compete overseas, UCC, already in the Phisix, will be upgraded to blue chip status and bought by institutions for long-term investment.

A few weeks ago, volume suddenly rose from 3 million shares a day to 6 million, 15 million and 16 million on three consecutive days. As a result, the shares briefly touched P3. Who was buying? We don't know except that on the last day, a foreign broker bought 12 million shares. It would certainly make sense for Cemco to buy shares in the market at less than half the price they paid. As things stand, Cemco owns 78 percent of UCC, Sumitomo, 9 percent, and Aboitiz and others, 3-1/2 percent, so the "free-float" is only 9-1/2 percent, or about 600 million shares.

BEARBULL/ B4

Stocks surge . . .

From page B1

forms.

Foreign buying yesterday at the Philippine Stock Exchange amounted to P955.73 million against selling of P439.48 million. As a result, foreign investors were net buyers of P516.25 million worth of shares.

Analysts' said the overnight gain on Wall Street, which pushed up stocks listed there such as telecom giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., aided the market's climb.

The US Dow Jones Industrials index soared 112.4 points or 1.1 percent last Friday and was up week-on-week by 1.4 percent or 145 points.

Pomento added that the performance of the local equities market in the coming months would also depend on how soon the government could put its reforms in place.

"Investors are positioning (buying ahead) on these developments," he added.

Mirroring the overall market optimism, all sectors posted heavy gains, led by property and mining stocks.

The property index was up 35 points or 5.7 percent while mining shares climbed 95 points or 4.9 percent.

Among the most actively traded shares were PLDT, which closed at P1,465 from P1,420 last Friday, mall developer SM Prime Holdings Inc. at P7 from P6.60 and Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) at P48 from P46.

Jun Mendoza, head of investments at Banco de Oro Trust Banking Group, one of the country's major fund managers, said the market's rally was earlier than expected since he saw the index hitting 1,850 at the end of the year.

He added that third-quarter corporate earnings would soon be released and this could cause some selling if the numbers would fail to meet investors' expectations.

DISCLOSURES

THE LISTING of 19,657,388 common shares of Semirara Mining Corp. is set for Oct. 6.

* * *

GLOBAL Business Holdings Inc. confirmed that Mirant Global, a joint venture of the company and Mirant Philippines, will spend $400 million to upgrade its power plants in Cebu and Quezon to meet the growing demand for electricity in Luzon and Visayas by 2008.

* * *

THE BOARD of Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp. accepted the resignation of directors Sheri Inocencio and Nelson Yap. Elected directors were George SyCip and Roberto Atendido.

* * *

DMCI Holdings Inc.'s director Victor Consunji acquired additional DMC common shares of 230,000 shares on Sept. 27 at P2.14 per share and 100,000 shares on September 28 at P2.06 per share.

* * *

AJO.net Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on November 22, 3 p.m. Record date is on Oct. 15. The venue and other details will be announced as soon as they are finalized.

Compiled by Ray Leyesa, PDI Research

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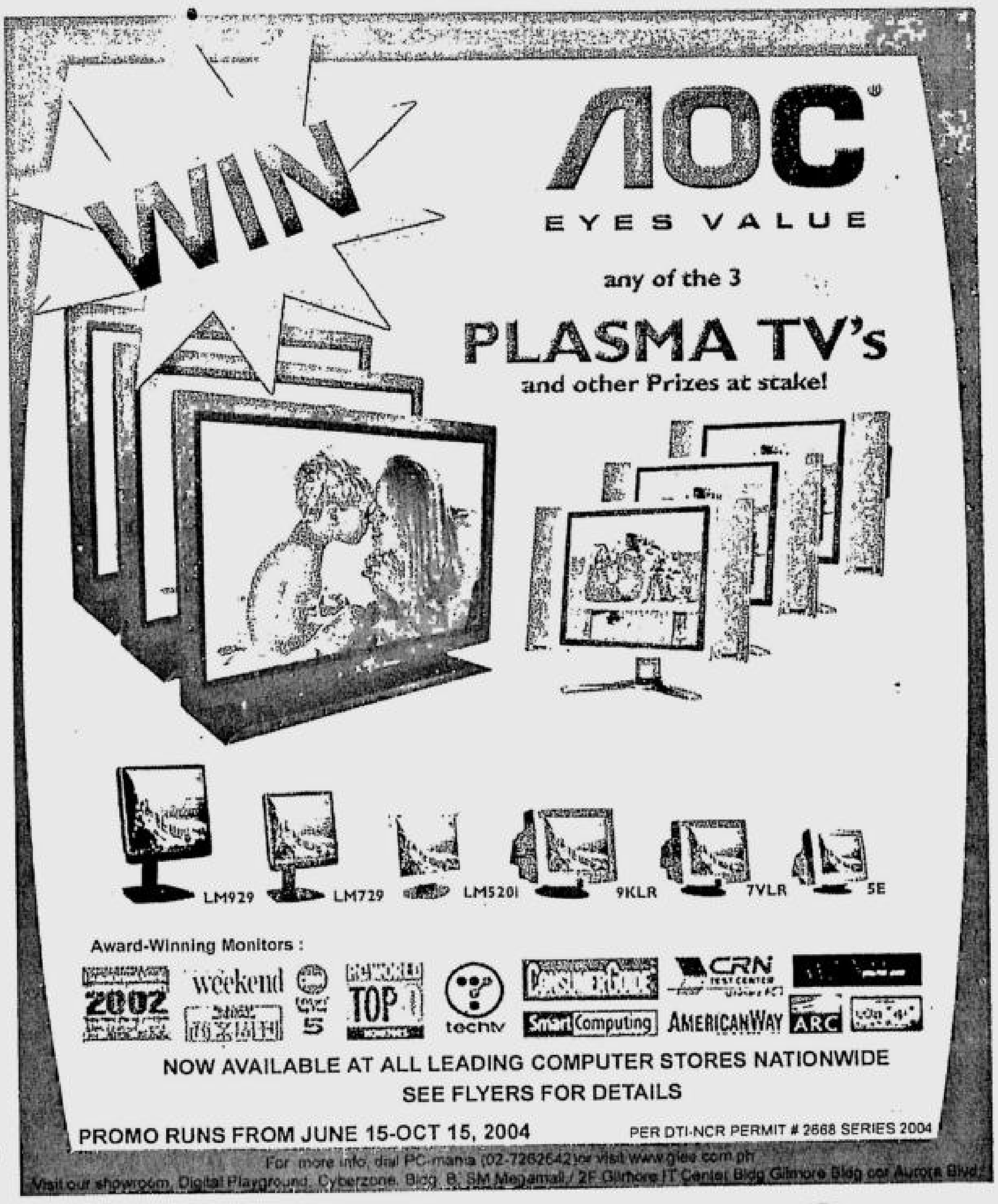
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DRASTIC FISCAL REFORMS

RP urged to cut foreign debt to 57% of GDP

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund has urged the Philippines to slash its foreign debt to 57 percent of gross domestic product by 2009, from the projected 74.6 percent this year, through much-needed fiscal reforms.

In a report analyzing the sustainability of the country's debt, the IMF warned that without the key reforms, the debt-to-GDP ratio could rise instead to 77 percent of GDP.

"A more ambitious reform agenda, including front-loaded fiscal consolidation, would facilitate a significant reduction in external vulnerability," the IMF report said.

"A recovery in foreign investment and equity inflows, an improved outlook for exports, and relatively lower interest rates, would enable the government to reduce its external borrowing while still maintaining an adequate level of reserves," it stressed.

Without substantial reforms, the IMF warned that the country's external position might weaken.

"The government needs to borrow substantially to finance a rising fiscal deficit and to prop up official reserves," it said.

If only a "modest" fiscal consolidation would be implemented, the IMF said external debt would stabilize at about 70 percent of GDP from 2006 to 2009.

The IMF is pushing for the front-loading or acceleration of the fiscal deficit reduction program, arguing that the markets were looking for strong initial evidence of the government's ability to tackle its fiscal problems.

"Second, fiscal measures were likely to be easiest in the opening period of the new administration," the IMF said in the report.

In line with this, the IMF favored a reduction in the deficit of the non-financial public sector—referring to the national government itself and the government-owned and -controlled corporations—by 2.5 percentage points of GDP by 2005.

However, it said the government did not consider the upfront deficit adjustment to be politically feasible. It noted that the government believed that only three revenue measures—increasing alcohol and tobacco excise taxes, increasing petroleum excise taxes and introducing a telecommunications franchise tax—had a reasonable chance of being passed by Congress over the next six months.

These measures are expected to contribute a combined additional revenue of P60 billion or 1.2 percent of GDP.

Together with National Power Corp.'s rate increase, which should help the government shore up its finances, the IMF is expecting the country to cut the non-financial public sector's debt by 1 percent of GDP this year from 2003 level.

In the meantime, the IMF said the planned shift to gross income taxation was "ill-advised," particularly given the uncertainty to its revenue impact.

The IMF also urged the government "to strongly resist proposals for new tax amnesties, which had been tried repeatedly in the Philippines."

It said such a move was likely to do more harm than good to future compliance.

It said a higher value added tax (VAT) rate was an attractive revenue-raising option.

"At 10 percent, the VAT rate in the Philippines was not high by international standards, and there was widespread international evidence that raising the VAT rate would significantly increase tax revenues, even for a country with low VAT efficiency."

Gov't, business move to address meat supply concerns

By Ronnel W. Domingo

PRIVATE sector representatives are meeting today with government officials to tackle concerns over a possible repeat of the chicken and pork shortage that plagued Luzon markets late last year.

Raul T. Concepcion, chair of the Consumer and Oil Price Watch, yesterday told reporters that Sen. Manuel Roxas II raised the issue last week in a Senate hearing attended by government and private sector officials.

"(The senator) voiced concern over the report of the National Federation of Hog Farmers, which said that due to low farm gate prices and the consequent losses, the group's members have started reducing their stocks," Concepcion said.

He quoted NFHF figures showing that the price of pork at the farm gate has dropped to P55 per kilogram from P75 a kilo.

Concepcion said, however, that price watchers were mystified why pork continued to fetch at least P120 a kilo at the retail markets.

Also, he said the United Broiler Raisers Association reported that its members were also reducing their stocks as farm gate prices dipped to P40 a kilo from a range of P54 to P56 a kilo. The group said it cost them P60 to produce a kilo of chicken.

According to latest data from the DTI monitoring, fully dressed chicken was fetching P95 a kilo while pork was being sold at P130 a kilo.

"Senator Roxas requested the departments of agriculture and of trade and industry to define the role each would play to address the gap between farm gate prices and retail prices of chicken and pork to prevent last year's shortage," he said.

Earlier this year, Agriculture Undersecretary Teresa Capellan said the price of pork in wet markets have gone up to an average of P145 per kilo.

Capellan said the shortage of pork was limited to Luzon, especially Metro Manila, but that the cost of transportation from other parts of the country did not help to address the problem.

INDUSTRIAL PEACE

President Macapagal-Arroyo and Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas join representatives from the labor sector and the employers' group during the signing of the milestone Social Accord for Industrial Peace and Stability. With the President are (from left): Ramon Jabar, president of the Federation of Free workers; Zoilo Dela Cruz, president of the Beverage Industry National Union; Avelino Valerion, president of the Pambansang Kilusan ng Paggawa; Sto. Tomas; Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita; Rene Soriano, president of Employers Confederation of the Philippines (Ecop) and Vladimir Tupaz, president of Trade Union of the Phils. and Allied Services (Tupas). VAL HANDUMON

Getting LGUs involved in tax collection

By Herminio G. Teves

COMMENTARY

INSTEAD of reducing the internal revenue allotment (IRA) of local government units, President Macapagal-Arroyo should involve these LGUs in tax collection, which is really the main culprit for the country's fiscal woes.

The LGUs should have a direct hand in improving revenue collection as they get 40 percent of tax collection in the form of the IRA. It will be in their best interest to get involved in revenue generation and monitoring.

They are in the best position to uncover tax evaders and tax cheats. They issue business permits in their respective localities. This covers all establishments such as hotels, motels, restaurants, drugstores, factories, general merchandise stores, distributors, funeral parlors, memorial parks and repair shops.

Corporate income tax

Nearly all business establishments have a mayor's permit but it is highly doubtful that these establishments pay the correct taxes or remit any income tax to the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) at all.

This is very evident with the number of registered companies versus the list of corporate taxpayers. If you look at data from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the number of registered corporations reached 451,309. However, only 39,833 corporations or less than a tenth of the SEC-registered companies filed their income tax returns.

If you look at the companies that actually paid their income taxes, the number comes down to a mere 5 out of 100 registered companies, with only 23,586 corporations accounting for P112.4 billion in corporate income tax collection last year.

Individual income taxes

A vigorous effort to expand the corporate tax base through SEC-BIR-LGU cooperation in taxation and expansion of the base to 75,000 corporations could easily raise an additional P50 billion in revenue collection for the government.

All individual income taxes are also paid to the local Regional District Offices (RDOs). As these RDOs are embedded within the local government, the LGUs can help them identify affluent families in the area that should be targeted to pay individual income taxes and property taxes.

They can also use the National Statistics Office's report on family income in their respective areas for this purpose.

There is a huge discrepancy between the NSO report and the actual number of individual taxpayers.

BIR data showed that individual income taxpayers only reached 470,948 in year 2001 with almost 90 percent of them accounted for by salaried employees whose taxes were automatically withheld. But the NSO report showed that over four million families were taxable which could generate P183 billion in individual income tax.

Thus, for individual income tax alone, that meant P108 billion in additional collection if the government is only able to properly identify the leakages through cross-data monitoring of the different agencies.

President Arroyo should also mandate all LGUs that cover the RDOs to create a RDO Revenue Projection Group that will come up with a realistic estimate of potential revenues that can be generated in the locality.

Revenue projection group

Such group should be composed of at least five members, representing the provincial/city development councils, non-government organizations, the Department of Trade and Industry, treasurers or assessors, and even barangay officials of highly urbanized areas.

The revenue estimate of this group should be submitted to the RDO and a national task force for tax potential as well as the Department of Finance, and the BIR commissioner for the evaluation and collection by the RDO.

There are a lot more ways to improve the country's revenue collection in response to the looming fiscal crisis. All the government needs to do is look and go for it! *(The author is the representative of the first district of Negros Oriental. He is the senior vice chair of the House committee on ways and means)*

Gov't asked to curb oil smuggling

By Abigail L. Ho

BEFORE imposing an additional P2-per-liter excise tax on petroleum products, the government should exert a "determined effort" to curb the rampant smuggling of oil by increasing cooperation and transparency among all stakeholders.

According to Raul Concepcion, chair of the Consumer and Oil Price Watch, the government must first take concrete steps to rid the oil industry of this illegal activity.

Shipping lines, for example, must be required to submit information on all oil tankers coming into the country, Concepcion said. The information should include the name of the tanker's consignee as well as its destination.

All oil depots in the country should also undergo mandatory inventory to promote transparency in the industry. This would require the cooperation of all oil firms, both the refiners and the finished product importers, he said.

Another anti-smuggling measure that local oil firms should actively participate in is the reporting of suspicious oil shipments to the Bureau of Customs.

The BOC, for its part, should be more vigilant in catching entities that declare gasoline shipments as diesel to cut their tax payables. The specific tax on gasoline is higher at P4.35 a liter than that on diesel which is only P1.63 a liter.

"There should be more transparency. The government ends up the biggest loser here as these smuggled products (translate to) lost revenues for the government," Concepcion said.

The Asian Institute of Management's Policy Center came out with a study in 2002, which showed that the government lost roughly P1.2 billion in revenues in 2001 due to diesel smuggling.

This amount translated into around 300,000 liters of diesel obtained duty-free and sold each day at prices much lower than those offered by legitimate dealers.

On a monthly basis, this represented roughly 40 million liters sold all over Luzon and Mindanao.

Concepcion said some of the channels for smuggled diesel included some of the country's major ports, including Subic, Bataan, Manila Bay, Cebu, General Santos, Davao and other free ports and economic zones nationwide.

Depots in coastal areas near the smuggled petroleum products' points of entry as well as barges plying the Pasig River served as storage hubs for the illegally procured oil products.

DTI lifts ban on sale of Island Cement

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry yesterday lifted the ban on Solid Cement Corp.'s Island Cement brand after about two months of prohibiting the sale of the products coming from the firm's plant in Antipolo City.

In a two-page order issued yesterday, DTI adjudication officer Virgilio A. Sevandal said the ban was lifted as random samples of portland cement from the facility passed the latest 28-day strength test conducted by Philippine Geo-Analytics Inc.

However, the Department of Public Works and Highways is still doing a retest on the samples.

Because of this, Sevandal ordered the Bureau of Product Standards to conduct a monthly monitoring of Solid Cement's factory and the products coming from it starting today.

BPS director Jesus L. Motoomull said in an interview that the monthly audit was part of the conditions provided under a Sept. 9 order on the partial lifting of the cease-and-desist order against the sale of Island Cement.

He said the monthly surveillance on Solid Cement would be done for six months, at the end of which the bureau would recommend to the DTI whether to do more monthly audits or have it stopped. *Ronnel W. Domingo*

Bearbull

From page B3

While writing this article, I came across a recent item in Google headed, "US feels weight of cement shortage as China's building booms." As it is two pages long, I will condense it, but construction in the United States has been badly affected by China's insatiable appetite for cement and steel. China is now using seven times as much cement as the US.

With a population of 1.3 billion, mostly living in rural areas, China has commenced the construction of 86 railway tracks, which require huge amounts of cement and steel. Its increasingly affluent society recorded an 80-percent increase in auto sales that will require thousand of miles of new roads and their maintenance. Apartment blocks are going up by the hundreds in Shanghai and Shenzhen (I was there last Christmas and was astonished by the sight) and this will spread to other towns. At present, 160 to 200 million Chinese are applying for mortgages. Even if the economy slows down a little next year, the demand for housing and infrastructure will continue for many years.

By December, Holcim is planning to make UCC the export hub of Asia. There are two reasons for this. The first is that the Philippines is situated in the center of Asia, so that all countries are easily accessible by ship. The second reason is that although Filipino laborers earn more than their counterparts in most other countries, when the peso cost is converted into dollars, it comes out much lower. This is a rare occasion when having the weakest currency becomes an advantage.

Holcim will supply UCC with the most advanced technology, enabling it to produce cement faster, cheaper and more efficiently.

Holcim will also make available whatever capital may be required to convert the Philippines into an export center to the whole of Asia and even the US.

This year's results will be good, but next year's will be much better and I anticipate earnings doubling from 11 centavos to 22 centavos. Over the medium term, I am looking for P4 a share, but on a longer time frame, I feel that profits will justify the fair value of P6. Closing price P2.65. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

G7 policy stance weighs down yuan

SINGAPORE—The premium on the Chinese yuan in offshore markets yesterday shrank rapidly after the Group of Seven nations repeated their stance on currency policy while Chinese officials at the same declared that they had no time frame for liberalizing the yuan.

Markets had not expected much to be said or done at the meeting. It was the first G7 meeting attended by top Chinese officials, and it seemed unlikely that the big economies would pressure China or that the latter would make any concessions.

But heading into the meeting the premium on the yuan in short-term non-deliverable forward markets rose. It narrowed just as swiftly on Monday. One-month NDFs hit 250 points last week, a level last seen in March, pricing in a 0.3 percent appreciation in the yuan in a month. The yuan is tightly managed around 8.28 a dollar.

That premium on the yuan shrank to 100 points or 0.12 percent on Monday.

Deutsche Bank's James Malcolm said big speculators had not been involved in the move in yuan NDFs in the past two weeks.

"The positions were never very extended going into the meeting," Malcolm said.

Yet, the rhetoric from the meeting had not helped markets divine whether the yuan would be allowed to trade more freely sooner or later, he said.

Chinese officials at the G7 meeting repeated that they planned a more flexible exchange rate regime but that there was no timeframe for liberalizing yuan policy.

"China's forex regime could change on certain conditions, but we need to do more preparation," said central bank Governor Zhou Xiaochuan.

A G7 communique on Friday adopted the same language as previous meetings of urging flexibility in exchange rates—a message seen as aimed at China.

But this time, markets were less frenzied. One-year yuan premium rose to 3 percent, compared with 6 percent last year.

China has steadfastly resisted global pressure to liberalize trade in the yuan and has prioritized reining in investment and credit growth and reforming the capital markets over making changes to its currency regime.

"The pressure does not seem to be having any near term impact and at the same time the Chinese are increasingly clear the move is coming," Malcolm said. "People still want some underlying exposure (to the yuan revaluation bet)."

Most analysts believe China is unlikely to float the yuan for years, and may at the most allow the currency to trade in a wider range against a bigger basket of currencies. *Reuters*

US SECRETARY of the Treasury John Snow, left, shakes the hand of IMF managing director Rodrigo de Rato as members of the G10 gather during the World Bank/IMF Annual Meeting in Washington, DC. AFP

IMF exec sees uncertain times ahead

MADRID—Uncertainties lie ahead for the global economy, but no clearly negative factors threaten it, IMF chief economist Raghuram Rajan said in an interview published on Monday.

"We've had a year of solid growth, but there are problems like the high oil price or the imminent coming to an end of the stimuli that have made us grow so much," Rajan was quoted as saying in an interview with financial daily Cinco Dias. "That's why there is some uncertainty in the global outlook, although no negative certainty."

The IMF, in its twice-yearly global report at the end of September, gave a forecast for 5 percent world growth in 2004 and 4.3 percent for 2005.

Rajan said the impact of record high oil prices on inflation would take time to filter through.

"First we should see a rise in prices. There has been some of that, but not too much. Then there would be a rise in wages, but at the moment that is not happening in Europe nor the United States nor Japan. I think the transfer to prices will take some time."

For Spain, Rajan called for vigilance over the housing market—where some studies show prices have more than doubled since 1999—but declined to call the current situation a bubble as "bubbles are called that once they collapse." *Reuters*

Kuwait official expects oil prices to drop in Q2 '05

KUWAIT—Kuwait's energy minister Sheikh Ahmad al-Fahd al-Sabah yesterday that he expected sky-high oil prices to start falling only in the second quarter of next year.

Sheikh Ahmad also told reporters at Kuwait airport that the Opec nation was on track to have up to 200,000 barrels per day of spare production capacity as early as next week, and would add the oil to the market if needed to help cool prices.

When asked if he thought prices would start easing on world markets, the Kuwaiti minister replied: "In the second quarter of the coming year."

Sheikh Ahmad said that an additional production capacity of 180,000 bpd to 200,000 bpd would be available to Kuwait by the middle of October, after work finish on a damaged oil gathering center at a major northern oil field.

"We are now at the stage of realizing the 200,000 bpd of output," said the minister, who was at the airport as part of an official delegation welcoming top defense officials from the US-allied Gulf Arab states meeting in Kuwait yesterday.

"To be really precise, we will begin restarting Gathering Center-15 during the second or third weeks of this month," Sheikh Ahmad said, referring to the specialized unit which separates oil from associated gas and water at an oil field.

"If there is a need, it (extra oil) will be pumped into the market, God willing," he added.

Kuwait pumped oil at a breakneck 2.5 million bpd in September as part of a bid by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries to push down prices.

The spare oil will bring the Gulf Arab state's total output capacity to 2.7 million bpd.

On Sunday, Sheikh Ahmad was quoted by newspapers as saying that fears over global geopolitics, economies or terror attacks were among factors behind the oil price spike, not lack of supplies or Opec cartel policy.

"Opec ... worked to increase output and to supply the markets with their needs, and all indications point to the fact that there is no shortage in the world markets from the supply side," Sheikh Ahmad added.

Opec, which controls more than half of the world's exports, is producing at a 25-year high of close to 30 million barrels per day in a bid to cool prices.

After hitting an all-time high of $50.47 on Tuesday, US oil prices are now holding above $49 a barrel amid continued supply uncertainty and robust demand.

Prices eased on Monday after rebels in Nigeria withdrew a threat to target oil operations in the world's seventh-largest exporter, as part of a peace deal negotiated with the government on Friday. *Reuters*

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TO BID

PNOC Exploration Corporation (PNOC EC) invites interested contractors to apply for pre-qualification and submit sealed bids for the project:

Scanning, Vectorizing, and Post-scan Reprocessing of 2D Seismic Data in the Sulu Sea (HX04-324

The Approved Budget for the Contract is Php 300,000.00 chargeable against PNOC EC fund.

The Contractor shall provide scanning, vectorizing, and post-scanning processing of around 14,600 line kilometers of 2D seismic data acquired between 1973 and 1993 in the Sulu Sea Basin, Philippines.

Pre-qualification and bid documents shall be available for issuance at the above address from the Operation Services Group (c/o Mr. Carlos L. Mejias or Mr. George N. Alejandro) starting September 24, 2004 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PESOS: One Thousand Two Hundred (PHP 1,200.00).

The bidding shall utilize a two (2) sealed envelope system. The first envelope shall contain the Technical Bid and the second envelope shall contain the Financial Bid. The Technical and Financial Bids shall be submitted in two (2) sets each to the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) not later than 3:00 P.M. of **October 27, 2004** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter. Late bids shall not be accepted.

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a Pre-bid Conference will be held on **October 13, 2004, 2:00 P.M. 2:00 P.M.** at the Conference Room of PNOC Building 1, Energy Center, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

PNOC EC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any formality therein, or to accept such bids or to award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PNOC EC.

This publication is also posted in our website at www.pnoc-ec.com.ph and in the DBM website at www.procurementservice.net.

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LEGAL NOTICE

The estate of the late **Amorsolo Ulgado Cervantes and Lourdes Altamira Cervantes** was extrajudicially settled among his heirs per Deed of Extrajudicial Settlement dated 20th of September 2004, entered as Doc. No. 436, Page No. 90, Book No. XVI, Series of 2004 of Makati Notary Public Terencio F. Taloma Jr.
(PDI - October 5, 12, 19, 2004)

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Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
CENTRAL OFFICE
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

Bldg #6 SAN LAZARO COMPOUND
RIZAL AVENUE STA CRUZ
MANILA PHILIPPINES
TEL NO (632) 743-83-01 LOCAL 1625-1626
FAX NO (632) 743-72-36
E-Mail Address www.doh.gov.ph

16 September 2004

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

DISTRIBUTION AND BROKERAGE SERVICES
IFB No. 2004-10-19 (22) & 2004-10-20 (23)

1. The Department of Health (DOH), through the appropriation provided under the DOH Budget (RA No. 9206) intends to apply the sum of Thirty Million Philippine Pesos (PhP30,000,000.00) to provide **DISTRIBUTION SERVICES** and Eight Million Philippine Pesos (PhP8,000.00) for the **BROKERAGE SERVICES**, to the DOH Central Office and Centers for Health Development (CHD) for the CY 2005.
2. The Department of Health (DOH) now invites sealed Bids from eligible bidders, who are qualified to participate for the said services.
3. Eligibility of prospective Bidders to participate will be based on compliance to eligibility requirements, using pass/fail non-discretionary criteria, as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 9184 (RA 9184), The Government Procurement Reform Act (GPRA), and is open to all organizations with at least sixty (60%) percent interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. The process for eligibility check is described in Clause 12 Section II of the Instructions to Bidders. In accordance with the IRR of RA 9184, only those Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check shall be opened and the Purchase Order (PO) awarded to the Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Reponsive Bid, provided the Bidder concerned passes the post qualification process.
4. Interested Bidders who wish to inspect the Bidding Documents and obtain further information should contact the Procurement Division, 2nd Floor, Bldg. No. 6, Department of Health, San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz, Manila, Telephone No. 741-97-75 (DL and Trunkline 743-83-01 Locals 1625 & 1626 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Mondays to Fridays. A complete set of the Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from **September 29 to 15 October 13, 2004** for the **DISTRIBUTION SERVICES** and **September 29 to October 15, 2004** for **BROKERAGE SERVICES**, upon submission of a written application to the following address.

   ALEXANDER A. PADILLA
   Undersecretary of Health and Chairperson
   Central Office Bids and Awards Committee
   Department of Health
   San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz, Manila

   and payment of a non-refundable fee of Ten Thousand Philippine Pesos (PhP10,000.00) for the Distribution Services and Five Thousand Philippine Pesos (PhP5,000.00) for the Brokerage Services. Payment shall be strictly on a cash basis.
5. The DOH will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties, to be held on **5 OCTOBER 2004** at the COBAC Conference Room, G/F, Bldg. No. 6, San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz, Manila, for the two (2) packages as follows:

DISTRIBUTION SERVICES	9:00 A.M.
BROKERAGE SERVICES	1:30 P.M.

6. Deadline for Submission of Bids shall be at the above address with the following schedules:

DISTRIBUTION SERVICES	October 19, 2004	9:00 A.M.
BROKERAGE SERVICES	October 20, 2004	9:00 A.M.

7. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in an amount at least equal to and not lower than, a percentage of the approved budget, in any of the following forms/terms:

a)	Cash, Certified, Cashier's or Manager's Check, and Bank Draft	One Percent (1%)
b)	Bank Guarantee	One & a Half percent (1-1/2%)

8. The DOH reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to issuance of contract without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **ALEXANDER A. PADILLA**
Undersecretary of Health and Chairperson

(PDI--Sept. 28 & Oct. 5, 2004)

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October 4, 2004

Notice to All Concerned

PROJECT PRINTING ONLY FROM CAMERA-READY-COPY AND DELIVERY OF MATH 1-6 LESSON GUIDES, MATH 3 TEXTBOOKS, AND HIGH SCHOOL MATH IV TEXTBOOKS TO PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND HIGH SCHOOLS UNDER SEMP2 AND TEEP PROVINCES

This is to inform all interested eligible bidders that the pre-bid conference for the above-stated project shall be conducted on **October 15, 2004 at 2:00 p.m.** at the Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal I Building, DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, 1605 Philippines.

The deadline for the submission and opening of bids shall be on or before **10:00 a.m.** on **November 12, 2004** at the same address stated on the first paragraph.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information at the BAC Secretariat, Room 112-A, Mabini Building, DepEd Complex, Pasig City or at Procurement Service, Rizal II Building, DepEd Complex, Pasig City, 1605 Philippines, Tel Nos. (632) 633-9343/636-6542/635-3762 or at Fax No. 636-6542 from 9:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m.

(Sgd.) **JUAN MIGUEL M. LUZ**
Undersecretary and BAC Chairman

(PDI - Oct. 5 & 12, 2004)

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on the

FOURTH DEATH ANNIVERSARY

of

Salud S. Tesoro

Holy Masses will be offered tomorrow, October 6, 2004 at the following churches:

Sto. Rosario Parish Church, Makinabang, Baliwag, Bulacan .... 6:30 A.M.
Nuestra Señora de Guia Parish, Ermita, Manila .... 8:00 A.M.
Tesoro's Mausoleum, Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City ... 8:00 A.M.
Santuario de San Antonio Parish, Forbes Park, Makati City ..... 6:00 P.M.
Immaculate Conception Parish Church, Cubao, Q.C. .... 6:00 P.M.

"All the pain and grief is over. Every restless tossing passed.
He is now at peace forever, safely home in Heaven with the Eternal Father."

DR. LUCERIO M. ANDAYA, JR.

*Peacefully joined his wife **Macaria** and our Creator*
on October 3, 2004 at the age of 76.

His children **Crisina, Angelica** and **Albert, Emmanuel, Vivian, Nathaniel** and **Suzette**; grandchildren **Lelina, Catherine Mae, Angelo Gabriel, Juan Miguel, Carrie Abigail, Agnes Ysabel, Camille Andrea, Arianne Ylena, Christine Angela**; brother and sisters, in-laws, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for his soul's eternal repose.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Inc., G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

He will be laid to rest on October 10, 2004, 10:00 a.m. at the family mausoleum at the Manila North Cemetery.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

Our Beloved

MANUEL LUI ANG

June 17, 1927 – October 3, 2004

Has joined his wife Gloria Limpe Ang, at the age of 77
to peacefully rest in the loving embrace of our Lord.

His loving children **Raymond, Roxanne, Randolph, Roselle, Romilda** and **Ronith**; children-in-law **Carolina Dy, Conrad Siy, Mariglo Aranda, Ben Khouw, James Caron** and the late **James Cogswell**; grandchildren **Claudine, Christopher** and **Christiane**; **Nathan** and **Cassandra**; **Vincent**; **Reisa, Reanne, Justin, Renee** and **Jared**; **Jordan** and **Sydney**; **Alexandra** and **Stephanie**; brothers and sisters; in-laws; other relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Capilla del Señor, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City from Monday, October 4, 2004. Masses will be celebrated daily at 7 PM.

Necrological services will be held on Thursday, October 7, 2004 preceded by a 10 AM Mass at the Santuario de San Antonio. Cremation services at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque follows immediately thereafter.

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

HERMOGENES SARTE REYES

Peacefully joined our Lord on October 2, 2004 at the age of 80.

His beloved wife **Belen Carlos**; children **Allen & Tessa, Sonny & Fran**; grandchildren **Pau, Anju, Arjun, Cheska**, and **Alex**; brothers, sisters, relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Nacional Memorial Homes, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, October 6, 2004 at Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Nacional Memorial Homes.

EMMANUEL M. CELIS

Peacefully joined his Creator
on September 29, 2004 at the age of 58.

His loving wife **Lumen**; children **Charmie, Mark, Jay** and **Justine**; his Parent **Josefina**, brothers and sisters **Riza, Willie, Cynthia** and **Jun**, and other relatives and friends request the pious readers for their prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at BF Alamanza Parish Church, Las Piñas.

Necrological services will be held today, October 5, 2004 at 1:00 p.m. BF Alamanza Parish Church, Las Piñas City.

Interment will be today, October 5, 2004 at 3:00 p.m. at Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat Parañaque.

On the occasion of his 74th birthdate,
we fondly remember the wit and wisdom of

Gerry B. Zapanta

who passed away on June 24, 2004
in Los Angeles, California, USA.

We request the pious readers to pray
for the eternal repose of his soul.

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"For God so loved the world, that He gave us His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have Everlasting life."
—John 3:16

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

ROLANDO "ROY" D. PAPA

May 16, 1944 – September 20, 2004

wish to express our most profound gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all our relatives and friends for being with us during our time of greatest sorrow – for the prayers, mass cards, messages of love, concern and sympathy, for the beautiful flowers and generous donations.

All of these we shall cherish as we keep him in our hearts always.

People, Events & Products

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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

E-Copyboard creates high impact business presentations

IMAGINE your office staff never having to worry about taking notes during sales and budget meetings. Or how about reproducing all your handwritten notes on the whiteboard during company meetings and downloading them into your personal computer for emailing to your head office?

These are all possible now with electronic copyboards (more commonly known as the "high-tech" whiteboard) where you simply write on the board and with a push of a button, you can immediately print out the exact replica of your written notes on plain paper or download and save them into your personal computer on the spot. As the name implies, you are able to "copy" anything written on the board to be stored in a memory card without the use of a PC. This does not only save your company time and money but is also an efficient way to get work done with a touch of sophistication and style that automatically enhances your company's image.

What was once a vision for many companies is now within reach with the introduction of the Plus M Series Electronic Copyboards. Manufactured by Plus Vision Corporation (Japan) and distributed locally by Gakken (Phils) Inc (GPI), the M Series is the world's first electronic copyboards with a built-in memory feature that allows data handwritten on the board to either be stored on the board's memory or produced in hardcopy or print out.

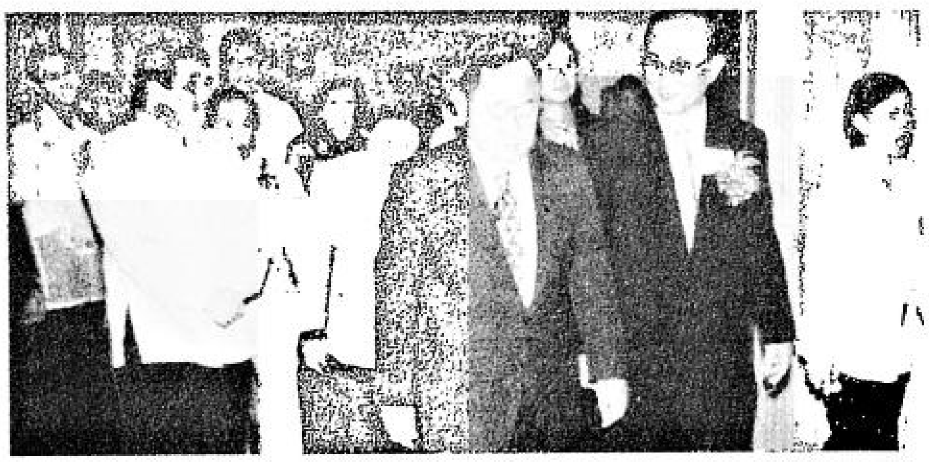
The Plus M Series offers the industry's broadest range of electronic copyboard models that can meet your every presentation need - whether you just need to have a printed copy of your notes written on the board or you need to save all your notes just like what the computer does for you. It is ideal for today's highly-competitive business environment where professional and creative presentations can help clinch a high-profile project.

The Plus M Series is one of the many technologically advanced audio-visual products for office systems automation that GPI markets. The company, which has its showroom along Aurora Boulevard, also distributes other Plus Vision Corp (Japan) products such as the DLP Projectors and other multi-media solutions. It also distributes foreign brands like Duplo Corporation's digital copy printer products, paper cutters and accessories, offset machines and platemakers from India and USA.

The M Series Copyboard's configuration can be mixed and matched according to conditions of use and purpose. The unit can be mounted on the office wall or partition and is perfect for small meeting rooms and cubicles where a conventional copyboard is too big. With prices ranging somewhere between P60,000 and P120,000, the product which is open for distributorship nationwide, is available at GPI's offices in Metro Manila, Cebu and Davao and through its dealers in Baguio, Batangas, Laoag, Tuguegarao, Bacolod, Iloilo, Dagupan, Ozamiz, Tacloban, Cagayan and Zamboanga. For product and distributorship inquiries, call GPI at 725-9373 or 744-5450.

EMPLOYERS' SUMMIT ACTION PLANS

Employers Confederation of the Philippines (Ecop) president Rene Y. Soriano (2nd from left) hands over the Action Plans drawn up by delegates to the recent Employers' Summit on Employment and Industrial Relations to Vice President Noli 'Kabayan' de Castro (2nd from right). The Action Plans spell out specific measures towards competitiveness under a 'bold agenda of reforms' to be implemented over six months to one year. Also appearing in photo are Ecop vice president and Philippine Exporters Confederation Inc (Philexport) president Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr. (extreme left) and Ecop chair Miguel B. Varela (extreme right).



SPEAKER HOSTS BANQUET FOR KOREAN, FILIPINO RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Dr. Christopher Lim (right), continental director of the Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace Asia, escorts House Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr to a function room at the Westin Philippine Plaza where he will host a banquet for the delegates of a peace symposium which was recently held there. The symposium entitled 'The Road Map for Peace and Harmony in Asia' was organized by the Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace and brought together religious leaders from Korea and the Philippines.

UWA HOLDS COMMENCEMENT RITES FOR GSM MANILA MBA PROGRAM GRADUATES

University of Western Australia recently held its first commencement rites for the first batch of graduates of its Graduate School Management Manila MBA program. With its local partner, the Australian Institute for Higher Education (AIHE), UWA offers an internationally-recognized MBA degree, pursuing excellence in research, teaching and through professional practice. In photo are some of the GSM graduates together with Christina Sutcliffe Thomas of the AIHE (front, third from left); Australian Ambassador to Manila Ruth Pearce (front, fifth from left); AIHE CEO Raymond L. Ang (front, eighth from left); Ray Fells, UWA-GSM professor (back, third from left); and Eduardo Fernandez of the AIHE (back, fourth from left).

TGI FRIDAY'S GMS UNDERGO INTENSIVE CULINARY WORKSHOP

The general managers (GMs) of all TGI Friday's branches in the Philippines underwent a seminar-workshop to strengthen their commitment to the restaurant's continuing effort to provide superior quality in terms of food and customer service. Friday's director for operations Robert Santos and Bistro Group corporate chef John Cu-Unjieng led the workshop that served as a refresher course for the GMs. Research and development manager Fernan Punzalan also joined as a trainor. As TGI Friday's look forward to its 10th year in the country this December, the restaurant intensifies its efforts to serve food of the highest quality and to offer the best dining experience.

PTA halfway through for a self-sustaining GOCC

THE PHILIPPINE Tourism Authority (PTA) which owns and manages various resorts, hotels, theme parks and golf courses all over the country have made a remarkable fiscal performance in the first eight months of the current year. Whereby, the PTA central office subsidizes the operations of these entities to the maximum tune of P40M annually, to date, the amount of subsidy outstandingly went down to 281th as of August 2004. A net savings of P39,775M , additional funding for more tourism infrastructure projects, which in turn, would generate more jobs for the unemployed Filipinos as called for by no less than Her Excellency, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. Official data was provided by Department Manager (DM) Teresita Verde of the PTA's Financial Services Department (FSD).

"Since day one of GM Robert Dean Barbers administration, the PTA has strategically redirected its focus towards a self-sustaining government owned and controlled organization", quipped Lydia Cosuco, Deputy General for Asset Management. "Our campaign started in the entities and we are all glad our efforts are starting to pay-off", she further added.

Accordingly, the Philippine Tourism Authority has relentlessly pursued improving the viability of its entities through a two-pronged approach, implementing measures that address both expense management and income generation. On expense management, PTA reinforced controls to better manage operating expenses of entities. And to generate more income, it waged aggressive marketing campaigns in both conventional and non-conventional methods.

"No General Manager has made a unparalleled achievement of dramatically cutting down the subsidy of the entities," quipped Chrestito Ocampo, "President of the Employees Cooperative of PTA (ECOPT), a newly formed cooperative conceptualized under the administration of GM Barbers. "This accomplishment is a testament to GM Barbers' competence and leadership," he further noted.

At present, PTA operates thirteen (13) tourism entities nationwide, among which are: Club Intramuros Golf Course, San Fabian PTA Beach Resort in Pangasinan, Tagaytay Picnic Grove, Balicasag Island Resort in Bohol, MacArthur Park Beach Resort in Palo, Leyte, Ramon Magsaysay Park in Davao, Banaue Hotel and Youth Hostel in Ifugao, Zamboanga Golf Course and Hilaga in Pampanga.

BOBSON IS TOP FASHION APPAREL AND SHOP AWARDEE

Bobson adds another feather to its cap as it outclassed other competing brands for the Top Fashion Apparel and Shop award during the prestigious 22nd annual National Consumers Awards and People's Choice Awards (NCQA). The awards recognizes excellently performing consumer products, services, companies and manufacturers, as well as high-fliers from the entertainment, business, education, sports and public service. The honor is heavy with meaning for the young and hardworking entrepreneur Victor Tan, whose keen interest and conscious effort to meet the fashion requirements of Filipinos inspired him to put up Bobson, under the Crolific Garments Manufacturing Corporation, in 1987.

FOUR ARTISTS SHOWCASE PAINTINGS IN 'CUATRO AMIGOS'

Four artist friends Malang, Manny Baldemor, Al Perez and Julius Limpe exhibited their recent paintings at Asia Art Gallery, Shangri-La Plaza Mall with the show titled 'Cuatro Amigos' just concluded successfully. Photo shows the ribbon cutting ceremony at the opening show (from left): artist Al Perez, Justice Omar Amin, artist Julius Limpe, madam Letty Talag, artist Malang, Dr. Rolly Tuaño, artist Manny Baldemor and Don Vicente Formoso who graced the occasion.

Bits Clips

PSMO holds confab

THE PHILIPPINE Society of Medical Oncology will be holding its 18th Annual Convention on Oct. 6 to 8, at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. The theme for this year is "Reaching New Heights in Cancer Treatment". For more inquiries, please contact PSMO Secretariat (Erlyn Javier/Eddielyn Igloso), tel. nos. 721-9326 or 723-0101 loc. 5318 or email at psmo-sec@pacific.net.ph.

Education Tech 2004

EDUCATION Tech 2004 Conference, Trade and Expo will provide a venue to promote the effective way of maintaining a clean and healthy environment through the "Convert your PET Bottle and Waste Paper into School Equipment Project" from Oct. 6 to 8 at the Philippine Trade Training Center. Education Tech will be staged back-to-back with Job Fair Philippines and Angono Art Festival. This year's theme is "Building the Nation Through Breakthrough Education." For more information, call EduTech at 651-1749, fax 451-0946, 0920-2119559, email edutech@mla.nsclub.net.

'Kaguluhan Music Festival'

THE BACK in Black Productions in cooperation with Cavite Coliseum will stage a slamming rock party on Oct. 15 at 8 p.m. Alternative rock bands Grayhoundz and ADA (Aggressive Dog Attack) will lead the Friday night, non-stop rock party posh "Kaguluhan Music Festival", to be hosted by Boy Piodos. The fiery party will also feature Starscream, Whorelocke, Stagnant and Sin sponsored by Blazing 105.5 FM and The Bomb 99.9 FM powered by Muzak Pro Audio System. Tickets are priced at P200 only. The Cavite Coliseum is located in Habay II, Bacoor, Cavite right after SM City Bacoor going to Imus. For ticket inquiries, call 0917-8353475 (Kid); 0917-8520724 (Dennis); (632)873-5989 (Chit).

WSI, BANTAY BATA 163 SIGN MOA

World Bazaar Festival takes up the cause of Bantay Bata 163 Joseph Ang (right), founding chair of Worldbex Services International (WSI), the organizer of the World Bazaar Festival and Gina Lopez (left), managing director of Bantay Bata 163, ABS-CBN Foundation Inc, signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) making Bantay Bata 163 the sole beneficiary of the upcoming 4th World Bazaar Festival. The biggest and the grandest holiday bazaar in the country, World Bazaar, will run from Dec. 6 to 13 at the World Trade Center in Pasay City.

Product FILES

Seafood specialties within your budget

THE 888 Fishing Place, Bar and Restaurant offers an ideal hideaway for fishing enthusiasts. Ambiance-loving people are the usual guests of the hottest fishing place in town located at Covelandia Road, Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite, only 18 kilometers away from Manila. 888 Fishing Place offers spendthrift seafood specialties like grilled tuna panga/belly, pusit lumot, tahong and talaba. It also has KTV rooms for the music fans, darts for cherry shooters and billiard tables for hobbyists

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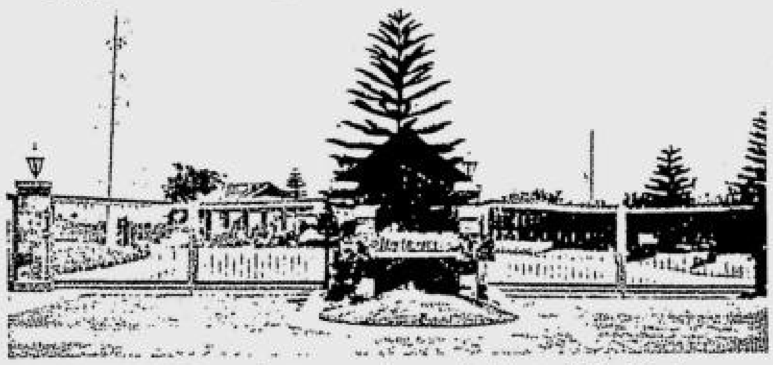
Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

THE CLUBHOUSE complex offers complete amenities.

Enjoying the good life in Tagaytay

By Charles E. Buban

BREATHE fresh, cool mountain air, stroll gently around the park, take a dip in the swimming pool or enjoy a game of tennis. You might also go to the clubhouse for an energizing workout in the gym or let any lingering stress drip away in the sauna.



A 20-METER-WIDE gated entrance welcomes residents of Alta Monte.

Located in the heart of the spectacular Tagaytay Ridge, Alta Monte is nestled on a private and self-contained 13-hectare estate, just 56 kilometers south of Metro Manila.

"Tagaytay Ridge has been the dream location of weary urbanites looking for a place where they could finally settle because of its proximity, relaxing surroundings and cool weather all-year round," says Erna Zalamea-Aragon, assistant vice president for marketing and operations of Don Tim Development Corp., the property's developer.

But because of the still ongoing real estate boom in the city, finding an available slot at a reasonable price tag would be a great challenge for Metro Manila home buyers.

ONE of the actual and livable model houses at Alta Monte.

Within reach

"When Don Tim Development Corp. decided to build Alta Monte, this is one of the factors it considered. With Alta Monte, we have introduced elegant homes with first-rate amenities that can be availed at reasonable costs and easy payment terms," she shares.

Aragon adds that Alta Monte lots and house and lot packages can be availed of without any reservation fee, through several down payment schemes, even at zero interest rates and other flexible terms.

"The developer has taken the extra mile of securing individual land titles for buyers, a value-added service most developers do not provide," she reveals.

By doing this, the developer has addressed a major problem area for a lot of home buyers.

Clubhouse complex

The fully developed property boasts of one-half hectare clubhouse complex with amenities such as swimming pool, multipurpose function room, basketball and tennis courts.

"Within the clubhouse complex, the developer included an ampitheater, an aviary, a children's playground, a mini football field, a waterfall and a fountain—some of the amenities that make Alta Monte a truly first-class countryside community," says Aragon.

Having marketed the project abroad, a lot of Alta Monte's buyers include *balikbayans*, as well as expats who wish to settle in the Philippines.

"Although there are so many Metro Manila-based mid-level executives who bought into the property, we are a getting a lot of interested buyers from abroad," she reports.

Mediterranean-style homes

Alta Monte units sport a Mediterranean-style concept using high-grade materials for roofing, flooring and superstructure.

Says Aragon: "Some of our inquiries would take note of how we are able to use top materials and still keep our prices at a reasonable level. The answer lies on the developer's profile."

Cutting middlemen

Apart from developing mid-level project mostly in the Silang and Tagaytay Ridge area of Cavite, Don Tim Development Corp. is also into construction, marketing and financing. This makes the company deal directly to the source, cutting middlemen in the process.

For example, a two-bedroom de luxe home unit on a 150 square-meter lot would only cost about P3.5 million if paid in cash. Similarly, a four-bedroom Elite XL home unit on a 340-sq-m lot would only cost about P6.6 million.

"The homes are for those who want to forego the hassle of construction. In fact, we could furnish these homes with everything and all they have to do is move in," relates Aragon.

For those who opt for lots only, Alta Monte has lot sizes ranging from 150 to 610 sq m. These give lot buyers flexibility to design their dream homes, "as long as they comply with some design and structure parameters we have set," adds Aragon.

Situated on Magallanes Drive, Alta Monte is only a few minutes away from Tagaytay's commercial, tourist and entertainment destinations.

"Being located conveniently to these places, plus all the amenities we are providing, we envision Alta Monte to be a permanent residence—not just a weekend home—for our home buyers based in Metro Manila," concludes Aragon.

MEGAWORLD'S
Eastwood
Excelsior

Eastwood Excelsior 90% complete

THE TWIN-TOWER Eastwood Excelsior, one of property giant Megaworld's fastest-selling projects, continues its ascent at Eastwood City, where it now stands 90 percent complete.

All exterior works, including window installation and painting works, have been substantially accomplished, while interior finishing, wall partitioning and electro-mechanical equipment installation are in progress at both towers.

Meanwhile, interior works for the grand lobby at the ground level have been substantially completed.

The development is slated for delivery by the second quarter of 2005.

Eastwood Excelsior hosts executive studios to three-bedroom condominium homes in a setting that fuses old European and contemporary themes. Among its deluxe amenities are lap and wading pools with a sun deck, changing rooms, a fitness center, multilevel parking, a laundromat and a retail arcade adjoining the lobby.

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Swiss-inspired Quadrilles nestled at CrossWinds

HIGH-END developer Brittany Corp. recently inaugurated the plush Swiss Quadrille units at CrossWinds in Tagaytay.

CrossWinds, christened after merging of wind currents coming from different directions, offer a secluded yet accessible retreat from the vexations of the metropolis. It is a lavish enclave amid thousands and thousands of imported pine trees that give the luxury of breathing in naturally pine-fragranced air.

Unique retreat

The Swiss-inspired architectural design at CrossWinds takes advantage of the constant cool breeze, giving the feel of being in the Swiss countryside in summertime all year round. Located in the undulating hills of Tagaytay, the unique retreat lies on the left side of the highway right after Picnic Grove and the road from the South Luzon Expressway exit via Sta. Rosa.

The Swiss Quadrilles are abodes of rejuvenation that elude most, yet are afforded by a discriminating few. A porch embraces the living room, where your family can savor mugs of hot chocolate and marvel at the scenic vistas of Tagaytay's greens.

What's in a Quadrille

Each Quadrille boasts of a ground floor with colossal and opulent dining and living areas most suited for entertaining guests or creating wonderful family moments. The kitchen, spaciously designed to house all the necessary conveniences, is an ideal setting for creating heartwarming family feasts and impressive social dinners.

The bedrooms have a grand view, since each one is located in the upper floor. Each bedroom is festooned with balconies, granting inhabitants the experience of breathing in the fresh and sweet smell of pine trees. The master's bedroom draws a portrait of utmost style with its sleek reviving interiors and toilet and bath cum walk-in closet. The pitched roof of each Quadrille unit allows the homeowner to construct an attic for supplementary space.

'Great room' concept

The Swiss Quadrilles takes on the "great room" concept with four residential Quadrille units per cluster, instead of building terrain consuming single-detached structures, allowing a plethora of outdoor space. Every resident is granted with utmost privacy and seclusion, with every unit's two common walls out of four per Quadrille.

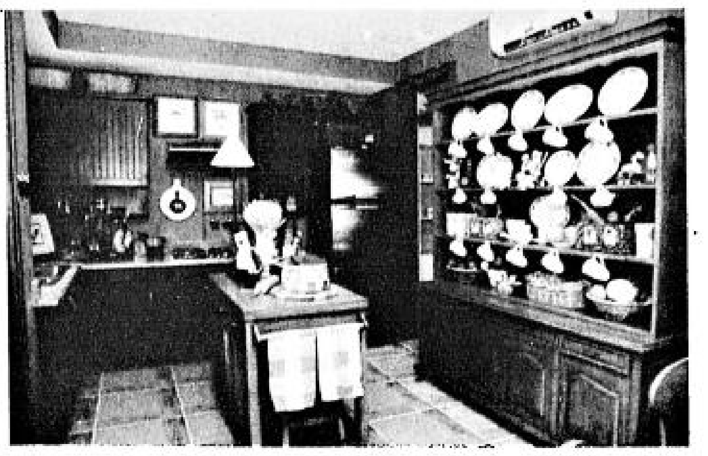
Future homeowners can choose from two types of Swiss Quadrille units being offered. Both hold equal extravagant architecture, the first with two bedrooms, with approximately 135 square meters of floor space, and the other with three bedrooms, with about 165 sq m of floor area and priced at P6 to P8.5 million.

Brittany considers future residents who want other options, thus, CrossWinds also offer individual lots, ranging from 450 to more than 1,000 sq m.

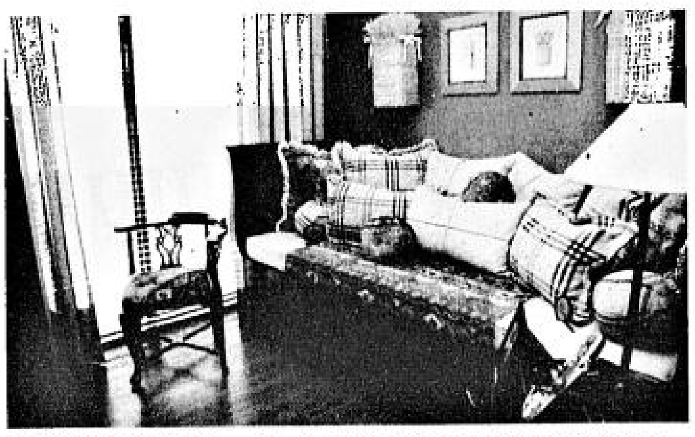
Jing Serrano, Brittany president and general manager, noted that the first phase of the Swiss Quadrilles has been sold out. The second phase, called Quadrille Rise, is now open to buyers.

The Quadrilles' architectural design is rendered by Recio + Casas while the model interiors are designed by the fitting tandem of sisters Ivy and Cynthia Almario.

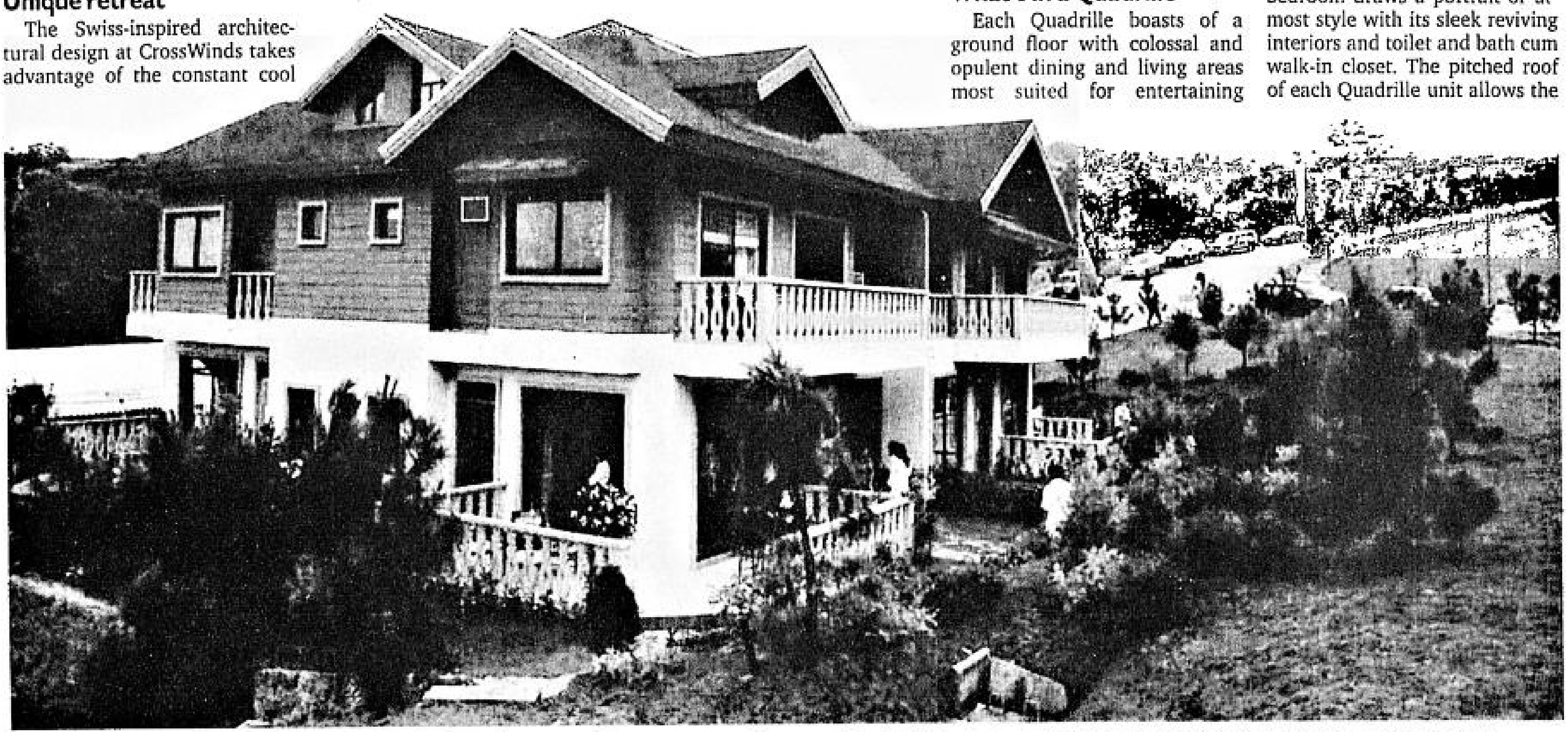
Property previews of the Quadrilles may be arranged by calling CrossWinds at 850-6986, 850-2868 and 850-3084.



EACH Quadrille kitchen, spaciously designed to house all the necessary conveniences, is an ideal setting for creating heartwarming family feasts and impressive social dinners.



A SWISS-INSPIRED boys' bedroom features a convivial sleigh bed complemented with checkered fabrics in camel, maple, reds and rust.



THE SWISS architectural design at CrossWinds takes advantage of the constant cool breeze, giving the feel of being in the Swiss countryside in summertime all year round.

Best of the South market happening celebrated at Ayala Westgrove Heights

AYALA Westgrove Heights recently hosted a weekend market event dubbed "Best of the South" to publicize the construction of the Westgrove Plaza, which began last month. The project expects completion of the first of its three buildings by the end of December, with tenants moving in early next year.

Ayala Land Inc.'s assistant vice president for Land and Community Development Group, Jun Bisnar explains that the future Westgrove Plaza will have much to offer residents of the development.

Says Bisnar: "Ayala Westgrove Heights is planned as an integrated community from the start. Ayala Land carefully mapped out the place to have a retail area, which will support the community. Day to day needs will be addressed with convenience stores, fruit stands, a bank, clinics, beauty parlors and a school supply store."

Shopping, dining

The village retail area, according to Bisnar, will be a convenient and accessible shopping and dining destination for homeowners with urgent requirements.

Relates Bisnar: "As more residents come in, we can expect the Westgrove Plaza to offer more variety. For example, with the current number of residents, one food outlet is enough. In the future, more food outlets and services will be added accordingly."

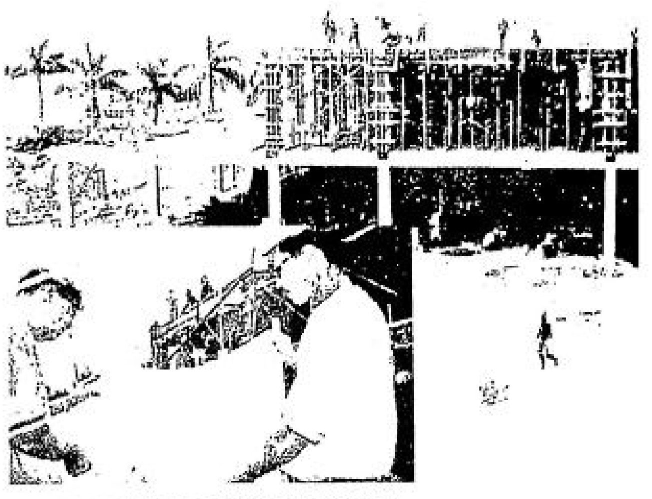
Great finds

He adds that the recent weekend market event is aimed at making residents aware of great finds at close proximity and at reasonable prices—a precursor to the much-anticipated new establishment.

The event was made successful with the participation of handpicked merchants selling some of the best products from the south. These include Ibrahim Jewelry (ethnic beadworks), Pineapple Queen (various pineapple products), Colette's Buko Pie (native pastries and sweets), Aliw-Alexis Farms Inc. (nut products), Gourmet Farms Inc. (coffee and other beverages), Flower Box (decorative flowering plants), Paddy's Basket (potted plants) and HM Trading (pesticides and insecticides).

Ayala Westgrove Heights is a haven for urbanites seeking a clean and secure living environment amid the hills and groves. For further details on the prime subdivision or future events, please call 848-5000, log on to www.ayalaland.com.ph, or e-mail ayala-sales@ayalaland.com.ph.

AYALA Westgrove Heights visitors get a glimpse of the development's scale model. Ayala Land representatives assisted them during the recent "Best of the House" weekend market open house.



FULL-BLAST CONSTRUCTION

Construction of CCP food and entertainment center goes full swing. Soon to be completed is the construction on Blocks I and 2 of the Harbour View Square, which will become the country's version of San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf and will have an ample view of the famous Manila Bay and its sunset. The complex, which will be completed by yearend 2004, will transform the CCP area into a major destination. Viewing the schematics are senior project manager of EPC Contractor, Asiakonstrukt, engineer Joseph Lopez, and architect Eugene Lejano of Meedson Properties Corp.

Excavation on West Parc's Alder completed

FILINVEST Alabang Inc. has completed the excavation work of the Alder building, the first building of its two-phase, seven-tower West Parc project.

Located in Filinvest Alabang's 1.1-hectare property at the West Gate Complex of the Filinvest Corporate City in Alabang, West Parc targets first-time condo unit buyers in the mid-range market within the southern Metro Manila-Cavite-Laguna-Batangas areas. Named after popular tree species, the Alder, Birch and Cedar buildings will comprise the first phase of development. Each tower offers a total of 119 units,

Affordable investment

West Parc is an affordable investment with studio units going for as low as P10,500 per month. The project is located a few meters away from the Alabang-Zapote Road, and is in close proximity to existing developments such as the Festival Supermall, PriceSmart, Alabang Town Center and the Northgate Cyberzone.

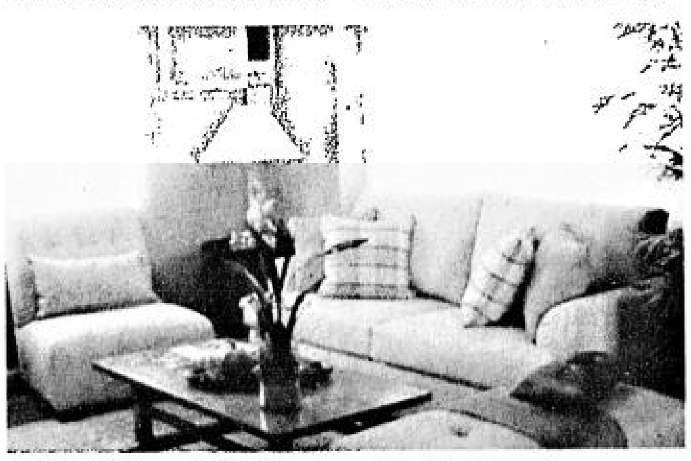
Each building of the Phase 1 development will have seven floors with bi-level units for studios and two- or three-bedroom units, all designed with space flexibility in mind. The ground floor of each building will have spaces for commercial establishments such as coffee shops and restaurants, and will have facilities such as a gym and day-care center.

Amenities like a lap pool, landscaped gardens, a children's pool and playground keep residents fit and their kids busy and happy. For entertaining, there's a function room and a cabana for outdoor barbecues.

Well-appointed units

The condominium offers well-appointed units to match every lifestyle. Studio units for single, young, urban professionals are available. For newlyweds as well as growing families, the towers have two-bedroom and three-bedroom units.

Retired couples who want to enjoy their golden years together in a smaller, more manageable household will find West Parc ideal. For added flexibility, adjacent units can be combined for people who prefer a more spacious home.



THE LIVING room in West Parc's model unit in Alabang

Solid Cement ...

From page C4

follow specifications of the American Society for Testing and Materials. These were thoroughly checked by ASTM representatives, earning for the laboratory an ISO 17025 certification in the fields of chemical testing and construction materials testing.

Together with SCC quality control manager Francisco Valdez and analyst Demetrius Yambot, Castro demonstrated to journalists how a three-day concrete block sample of their popular Island Cement brand is tested with a cement compression tester used by the testing laboratory.

Like a two-sided hydraulic jack, the compression testing machine pressed on the block while its LCD display counted up the pressure being applied until it stopped a few seconds later and the words "fracture detected" flashed on screen. This showed that the sample block fractured at 22.3 MPa, way above the international standard of 12.6 MPa. As indicated by its quality tags, the compression tester is regularly calibrated by Setsco, a Singapore-based organization.

Mineral composition

Beyond keeping with internationally accepted standards, Solid Cement has also set up a microscopy laboratory in its testing center. Because of its high-investment cost, such a lab is normally installed in the research and development facilities of other cement companies for occasional use in their product development. In SCC, however, it is deployed for full service daily as part of its quality control.

The microscopy lab is made up of a high-powered microscope attached to electronic video equipment. Here the SCC scientists can clearly see the mineral composition of the Clinker—the limestone, silica and pyrite mix cooked in 1,500 degrees Celsius also known as the base product from which cement is made.

De Castro to cite new thrusts to lick homelessness

DE CASTRO PDI PHOTO

VICE President Noli de Castro is expected to discuss new thrusts in the government's housing program for the country's homeless and forge a closer partnership with the private industry to boost housing production in his keynote address before the joint annual national convention of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations (Creba) and the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC). The convention will be held at the Boracay Regency Beach Resort in Malay, Aklan City on Oct. 21-23.

The Vice President is concurrently chair of the HUDCC, the top body overseeing the housing program. Convention theme is "Creba-HUDCC: Pursuing Global Business Opportunities" to increase housing production, open more employment opportunities and boost the national economy.

Dialogue

Soon after his speech, industry sector members will hold a dialogue with heads of government housing agencies, lawyer Romero F.S. Quimbo, president, Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-Ibig Fund); Gonzalo B.A. Bongolan, president, Home Guaranty Corp.; Celso delos Angeles Jr., president, National Home Mortgage Financing Corp.; Federico A. Laxa, general manager, National Housing Authority; and lawyer Romulo Q. Fabul, commissioner-CEO, Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board. This was announced by Creba national president Purita R. Soliven and VP for chapter affairs Avelina P. Acuña, overall convention chair.

Congressmen Eduardo C. Zialcita, chair, House committee on housing, and Rodolfo G. Valencia (Oriental Mindoro) will discuss congressional initiatives in housing during the ensuing business session. At the opening of the convention proper, HUDCC Undersecretary Armando de Castro and Soliven will give the opening remarks.

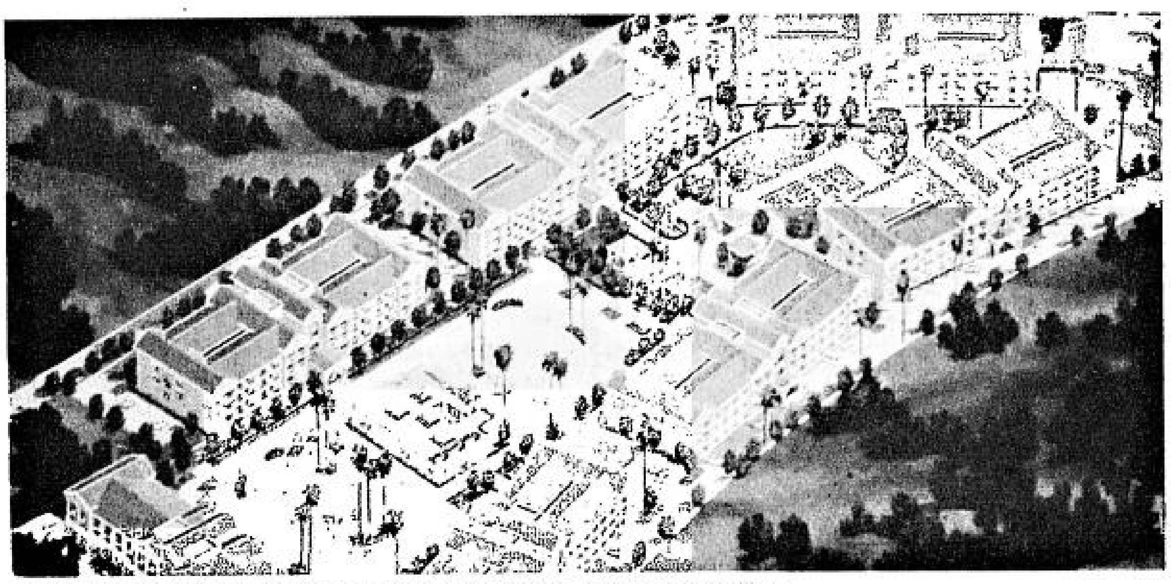
Speakers and their topics during business sessions are Gov. Armin Raquel-Santos, chief operations officer, Philippine Leisure and Retirement Authority, PLRA thrusts and accomplishments; and Raju Shahani, president and general manager, RCI Asia, "Resort Properties and Vacation Ownership"; Emeterio "Jun" Gonzales, VP-International Group Operations, Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-Ibig Fund), "Global Marketing of Philippine Properties"; and Dr. Jaime A. Cura, VP-marketing, Creba-GSI Inc., "e-Creba Internet Portal"; and Aklan Gov. Carlito S. Marquez, prospects of real estate development in the province.

Socialized housing projects

On the first convention day, the Creba Social Housing Foundation Inc. and the Department of Interior and Local Government will tackle socialized housing projects for local government units (LGUs). Discussing guidelines on socialized housing development in every city and municipality will be Rosemarie C. Basa, CSHFI chair. CSHFI president Efren "Choy" Alas and former CSHFI president Demetrio I. Posadas will speak on the various aspects of local housing projects.

Other first-day speakers are HUDCC Director Jeanette Cruz, "Initiating LGU Housing Projects"; Jaime Fabiana, Pag-Ibig Fund deputy executive officer and executive vice president, "Getting Approval for Pag-Ibig Fund Housing Loans"; and Margarito Teves, Landbank president, "Guidelines in Issuance of Letters of Credit Using Internal Revenue Allocation (IRA) as Collateral."

The CSHFI, HUDCC and the DILG convened last July a successful LGU social housing conference to promote affordable housing in local communities. Again, all city and town mayors and vice mayors have been invited and are expected to attend the October convention, especially those with housing programs for their localities.


ARCHITECT'S perspective of Subic Holiday Villas, the model retirement village

Retirement village to boost Subic-Clark int'l service

MORE tourists and investors from other Asian countries, the United States, Canada and Europe are expected to flock to Subic in Olongapo, Zambales within the next six years as the new Arroyo administration turns the Subic-Clark corridor into the most competitive international service and logistic center in the Southeast Asian region. This will be made possible by the completion of five vital projects: the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport, the Subic container port, the Subic-Clark toll road, the modern North railway and the North Luzon Expressway.

Expected to boost the corridor's international service is the construction of Subic Holiday Villas (SHV), a leisure and residential project located at the Subic Freeport Zone. The project includes a retirement village with state-of-the-art facilities, clinic/emergency room, care-giving services as well as a high level of security.

Model retirement community

Subic Holiday Villas is fast shaping into a model retirement community. Located near the George Dewey Convention Center in Lower Kalayaan, it occupies four hectares of prime land in a well-preserved environment. There will be seven clusters of three-story Mediterranean-inspired buildings with two- to three-bedroom units and studio units.

Apart from a medical clinic with an emergency room, other features and amenities are sports and physical fitness centers, sauna with therapeutic treatment, restaurant and dining areas, a pharmacy and convenience stores, a tropical swimming pool, a wading pool and a mini theater.

The project is accredited by the Philippine Leisure and Retirement Authority (PLRA). This means that a foreigner who acquires a unit can be entitled to a permanent resident visa to the Philippines.

Completion of the first three buildings by January 2006 and the four other structures by 2008 are stipulated under an agreement between Starland Properties Inc. (SPI), project owner-developer, and the Subic Bay Management Authority (SBMA).

People heading the project

At the helm of the project are architect Enrique O. Olonan, chair of SPI and Specified Contractors Development Inc., general contractor for the project; architect Henry Steve R. Olonan, managing partner of E.O. Olonan and Associates, architects and designers of the project; Jose A. Pobocan, SPI president, and Editha L. Manansala, president of Starland Realty Marketing Inc. (SRMI), SHV's marketing arm.

Marketing offices are located at Suite 305, Xavierville Square Condominium, #38 Xavierville Avenue, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, with Tel. No. 929-6034.

Good investment

Unit owners find the project a good investment as the units are reasonably priced (minimum of $39,750 for a 36-square-meter studio unit and maximum of $79,500 for a 72-sq-m two-bedroom unit). Payment terms are flexible: 10, 20 and 30 percent down payments are payable in two years with no interest; the balance can be settled within a maximum period of five years at competitive interest rates.

Unit owners get their money's worth as they enjoy using the villas during the amortization period. As a bonus, the first 100 buyers will each be given a free timeshare unit at SHV's Villa Enrique which is accredited by the Resort Condominium International (RCI).

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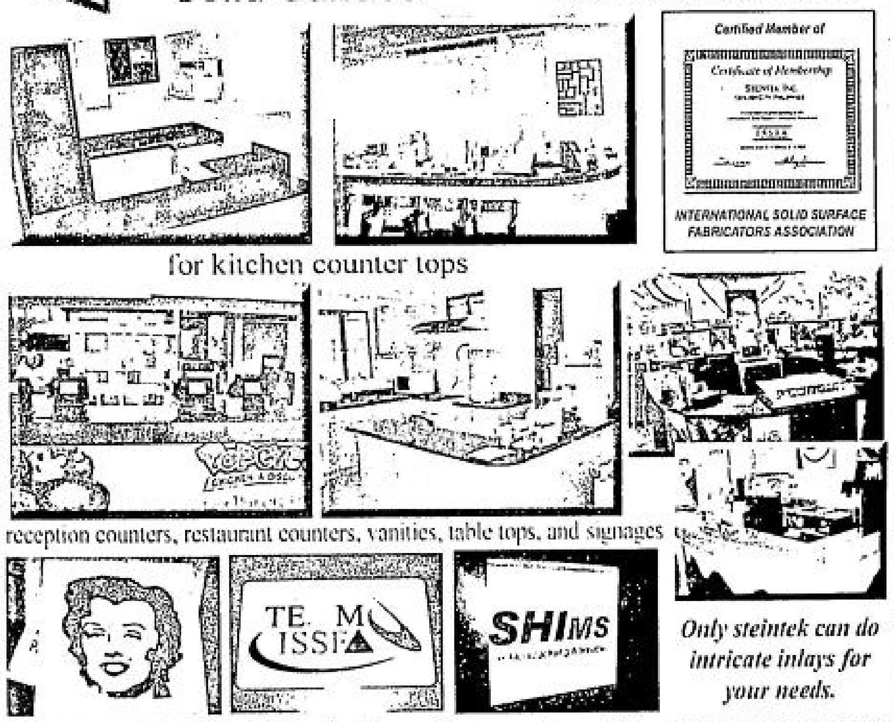
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Solid Cement testing lab gains int'l recognition

SOLID Cement Corp.'s quality and export manager Laura Castro and quality control manager demonstrate how a three-day cement block sample is tested with a late model Cement Compression Tester.

INTERNATIONAL quality standards set for cement products have become so stringent that cement companies worldwide have to invest in modern testing and laboratory facilities to keep in pace.

In the Philippines, modernization of lab facilities has reached the point where the plant of Solid Cement Corp. plant in Antipolo, Rizal, now enjoys certification from the top laboratory accrediting bodies in the world.

Testing cement quality

The key test for cement quality is the compressive test where a small, solid concrete block is compressed by a special machine until a fracture is detected. To determine the strength of the cement used, three blocks are made of each sample and allowed to dry at three different days: three days, seven days and 28 days.

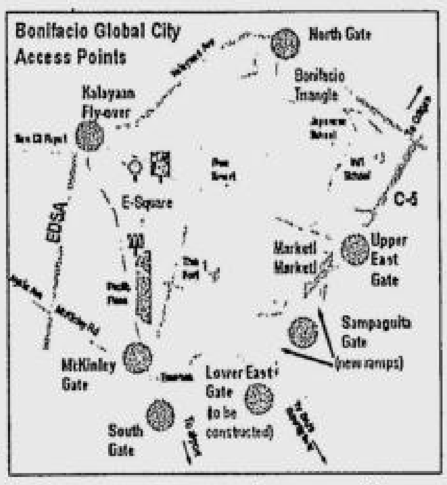
Each one is put under the compression test on their respective due date where the pressure in Mega Pascals (or MPa, the English measure equivalent of which is pounds per square inch) is measured until they crack. Also each one has a benchmark measurement that is internationally accepted so the sample blocks must surpass these measurements to be certified as quality cement.

Adherence to standards

According to Laura Castro, SCC quality and export manager, since the test is done to determine cement quality, the testing laboratory must be properly equipped and consistent in its materials and application to ensure that the only variable is the cement itself. It is in SCC's adherence to this strict standard that its testing laboratory is only one of two in the country that is accredited by the Australia-based National Association of Testing Authorities (Nata). The other is the APO Cement testing lab in Cebu which is also a unit of Cemex.

Castro pointed out that to keep all materials constant, the SCC used only distilled water to mix the cement to make the concrete block samples. Also all materials and lab equipment

SOLID/ C2



NEW access points near the new mall in Bonifacio Global City ensure that getting into and out of the new business district will be easy for shoppers and other visitors. Currently, the Global City offers seven access routes.

3 interchanges to Bonifacio Global City soon to be completed

METRO Manila will soon benefit from the completion of another new interchange along C-5. The interchange offers to residents of Quezon City, Makati, Pasig, Mandaluyong, Taguig, Parañaque and Southern Metro Manila additional access to Bonifacio Global City and its anchor developments.

Two access ramps at the Sampaguita interchange along C-5 Road will open in the next few weeks in anticipation of increased vehicular traffic to and from Market! Market!, Ayala Land's newest mall at the rising business district. Aside from the Sampaguita access route, the Upper East Gate is partly open. A third route, the Lower East Gate, will be built in the next two years.

Also in the masterplan for Bonifacio Global City is a public utility vehicle terminal within the Market! Market! premises.

Vital infrastructure

In anticipation of future commercial development in the area, Bonifacio Global City is setting up vital infrastructure even before much of the development happens, according to its planners. The new infrastructure improves access to the area and is likely to attract more offices and business to set up shop there, observes urban planner Art Corpuz.

Entry and exit points are crucial for a rising central business district like Bonifacio Global City. They encourage shoppers and visitors from the northern, eastern and southern parts of Metro Manila to visit the area. Especially in urban areas, Corpuz notes, "proximity is not measured in terms of actual straight-line distance; it is effective travel distance that takes into account travel time and ease of entry and exit that matters."

Bad access decreases the desirability of offices and stores to locate in any area while the reverse is true, points out Salvador Tan, Bonifacio Global City consultant for transportation planning. Good access translates into good business and eventually good land values, he says.

Access points

Two of Bonifacio Global City's access points—Sampaguita Gate and Upper East Gate—are very near Market!Market! In addition, there are five other access points: North Gate, McKinley Road, the Kalayaan Flyover, the South Gate and the Lower East Gate.

Apart from the construction of the ramps at the Sampaguita interchange, the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) is widening the Sampaguita bridge by one traffic lane.

The project was started in May and will be completed in November. A covered path on the northern side of the bridge under construction will provide commuters shelter from rain and sun.

No other development has this much infrastructure being built to prepare it for commercial development, notes Tan. He foresees that Bonifacio Global City is likely to evolve into a cosmopolitan center similar to international cities because of its progressive planning.

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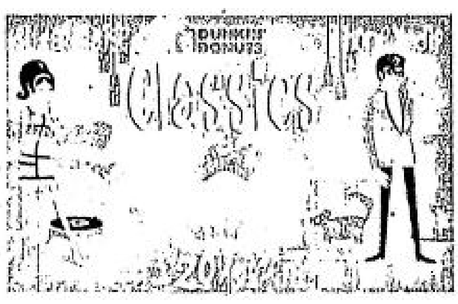

The benefits of fortified milk /D4

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MONDAY **ARTS & BOOKS** ● TUESDAY **FITNESS** ● WEDNESDAY **2BU** ● THURSDAY **FOOD** ● FRIDAY **FASHION & BEAUTY**

What makes food fattening?

If you are trying to lose weight, eat food that weighs a lot but has few calories

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

IN THE '70s, rice was considered "fattening" because the favored diet then was the Atkins. In the late '80s up to the late '90s, rice became "non-fattening" because low-fat diets were all the rage.

Now, rice is "fattening" once again, as Atkins, South Beach and other low-carbohydrate diets have become increasingly popular.

So is rice fattening or not? For that matter, what makes food fattening or not fattening?

Weight-to-calorie ratio

Tufts University says one way to determine this is through the weight-to-calorie ratio. If two types of food with different weights have the same amount of calories, the food that is lighter in weight is more fattening than the one that weighs more, because you will stop eating the heavier food sooner than the other one.

For example, a cup of rice weighs about 5 oz and has about 220 calories, while six crackers weigh 1.75 oz and have 240 calories. The rice will be less fattening because 1 cup will fill you up faster than six crackers.

But if you compare a cup of rice to a cup of *kangkong* or spinach, which weighs 6 oz but with only 42 calories, the rice is more fattening.

Heavy weight-low calories

A University of New Zealand study and several others found that people tended to eat the same weight of food daily, regardless of the calories they contained. The stomach seems to have an internal scale with a predetermined weight that has to be reached for a person to be satisfied.

If you are trying to lose weight, Tufts University suggests choosing food based on weight-to-calorie ratio. Eat food that weighs a lot but has few calories, and avoid what is light in weight but heavy in caloric value.

Fruits and vegetables are big winners in the heavy weight-low calorie department. They are heavy because of fiber and water but do not have many calories. A cup of cantaloupe or melon weighs 5.5 oz but only has 56 calories. Four oz of potato chips has 608 calories.

'Compressed calories' are fattening

The New Zealand University researchers say food that is lightweight but high in calories is probably the worst if you are trying to lose weight. "Compressed calories" put you in double jeopardy—you are still hungry, though you have more calories than you need.

Many processed snack foods are in this category. Most cookies weigh half an ounce but have 50 calories. Six cookies weigh only 3 oz but have 300 calories. A chocolate bar weighing 1.5 oz contains 220 calories, and a small croissant of 2 oz has 230 calories.

Volumetrics

Food that is bulky but low in calories is a low-energy density food. It has a small amount of calories in a large serving. It usually contains high amounts of water and fiber but low in fat. An example would be a medium-sized orange, with about 60 calories.

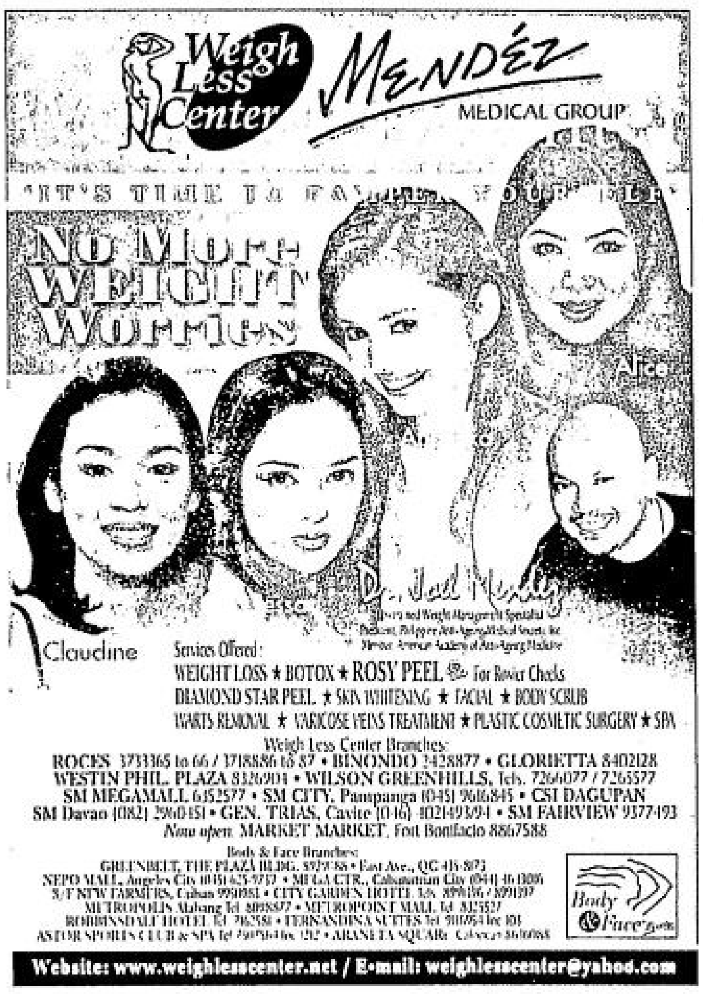
A high-energy density food has a lot of calories in a small serving. It usually has less water, lower fiber content and more fat. An example is a tablespoon of mayonnaise, with about 100 calories.

In her book, "Volumetrics," Prof. Barbara Rolls of Penn State University compares raisins and grapes to better explain the energy density concept. A 100-calorie serving of raisins is ¼ of a cup, while a 100-calorie serving of grapes is 1 2/3 cups. Since raisins are light, you tend to eat more of them before you are full.

Similarly, to get the same amount of calories in 10 jellybeans (100 calories), you have to eat two cups of strawberries. A cup of strawberries is already quite filling (50 calories), but 10 jellybeans won't even make a dent in your stomach.

Ten pieces of Hershey's Kisses has 250 calories, just like an 8-oz glass of chocolate milk. But the chocolate milk will satisfy your craving and also fill up your stomach.

WHAT/ D3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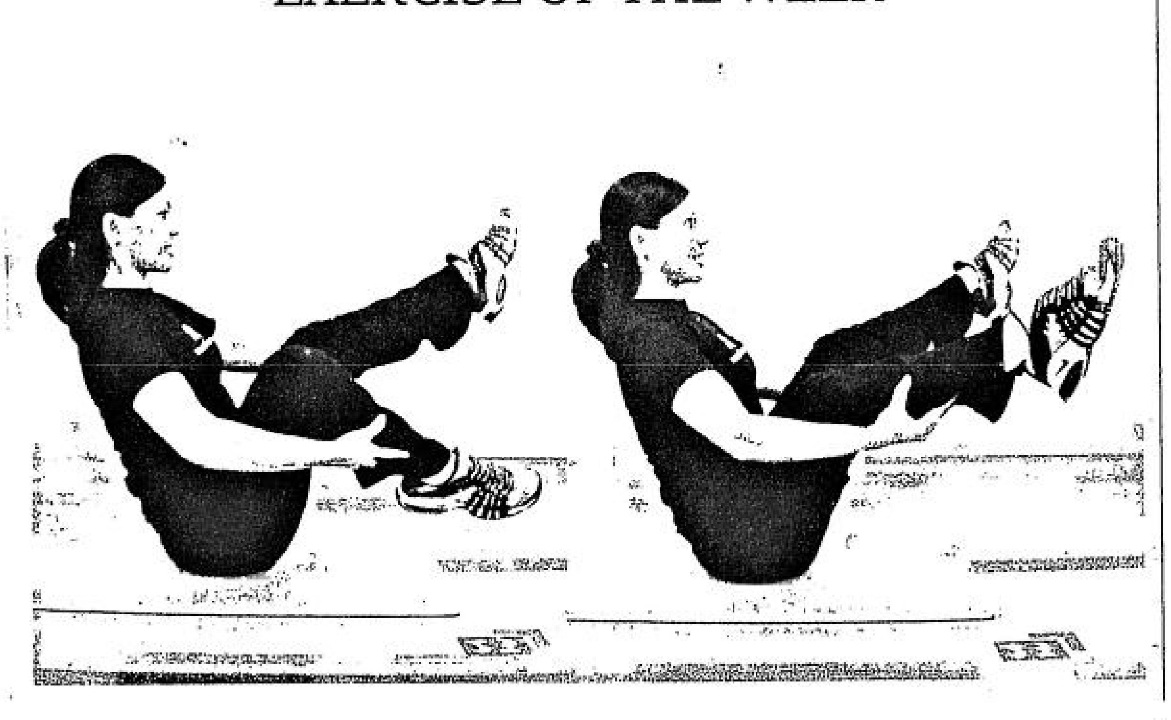
EXERCISE OF THE WEEK



V-sit with open legs

THIS yoga and Pilates-inspired exercise strengthens the abs and quadriceps (front of the thighs), as well as stretches the hamstrings (back of the thighs) and inner thighs.

Equipment:

Exercise mat

Exercise technique:

1. Sit with your back straight, feet together, knees bent and open. Hold behind the thighs or the back of the ankles.
2. Lean back and balance on buttocks. Lift your feet off the floor.
3. Contract muscles in the front of the thighs as you straighten your legs one at a time.
4. Alternately bend and straighten legs for the desired number of repetitions.

Performance tips:

1. Ideally, both your back and your legs should be straight as you perform this exercise in the V-sit position. If you can't do both, emphasize a straight back instead of straight legs. Avoid rounding your back to achieve straighter legs.
2. A harder option is to bend and straighten both legs.

Repetitions:

Do five to 10 repetitions.

LOOK GOOD, FEEL GOOD!

Looking good is a concern no longer exclusive to woman. Through the years, men have slowly overcome their inhibitions in turning to cosmetics and professionals for a little bit of assistance in sprucing up their appearance.

While men's grooming regimen used to consist of slapping of aftershave and spraying on cologne, they are now more open to experimenting with products and procedures. The stigma traditionally affixed to such willingness seems to have been obliterated and overpowered by aesthetic considerations.

The growing level of vanity in today's society has been putting a lot of pressure on men to watch their weight. As women have known all along, thin is in, fat is out. But the effects of being overweight goes beyond skin deep. The need to curb excess pounds is much more than just a cosmetic concern. More than anything, being on the heavy side is a risk for numerous diseases.

Diabetes is influenced by weight. Overweight men are more than three times likely to develop Diabetes than their leaner counterparts. The chance of developing gallstones, heart disease, and stroke is directly proportional to the extra baggage one's body carries. Other conditions that have been associated with being overweight include osteoarthritis (or wearing away of the joints), sleepapnea (a condition in which a person stops breathing for short periods during the night), cancer, and respiratory problems.

In addition, there are psychological and social effects associated with weight problems. With prejudice and discrimination due to being overweight, come feelings of rejection, shame, and depression.

A healthy weight is clearly beneficial to one's overall well-being. People who are already slim should avoid gaining weight, which often occurs as one grows older and becomes more sedentary.

There is no such thing as single ideal weight for any height, but rather there is a healthy weight range which is based on a Body Mass Index (BMI). The BMI is a measure of body fat in adults. The BMI is calculated by dividing your weight (in kilograms) by your height (in meters) squared. One who has a BMI above 25 is considered overweight.

Looking after one's health is a responsibility we must not take for granted. Men, in particular, need to challenge the stereotypical norms and start caring about their habits in order to look better and feel better.

Foremost is eating better. Men should eat more bread, cereals, fruits and vegetables, and supplement these with small quantity of dairy products and lean meat. For best results, your good food must also be prepared, cooked, and served in the most nutritious way.

Because stress is one of the main reasons people and thus experience gaps in their effort to lose weight, it is critical to pay attention to this. Different methods for reducing tension have been discovered to be helpful, including simple things as deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, and meditation.

Having social support in your life will increase the likelihood that you will be successful in your weight loss effort. It can simply mean having a weight loss "buddy" with whom you get and give encouragement and keep track of progress. It can also mean involving your family in your weight loss effort. You may turn to them for encouragement, support, and assistance with trying new behaviors.

Making physical activity a part of your daily life is an important way to help control your weight. Spend less time in activities that use little energy. Instead make it a point to do at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day on most days of the week.

And to further assist in your weight loss program is **Gang Xian Herbal Slimming Tea for Men**, a long-trusted, all-natural tea composed of a combination of ingredients that stimulates the processes in the lower digestive tract and eliminates fats by flushing out toxins from the body. **Gang Xian Herbal Slimming Tea for Men** taken regularly is known to bring blood pressure down, strengthen the immune system, prevent heart disease, and fight cancer.

Make it easy on yourself and give healthful eating, planned physical activity and **Gang Xian Herbal Slimming Tea** a high priority in your daily routine. You will reap the rewards in the long run.

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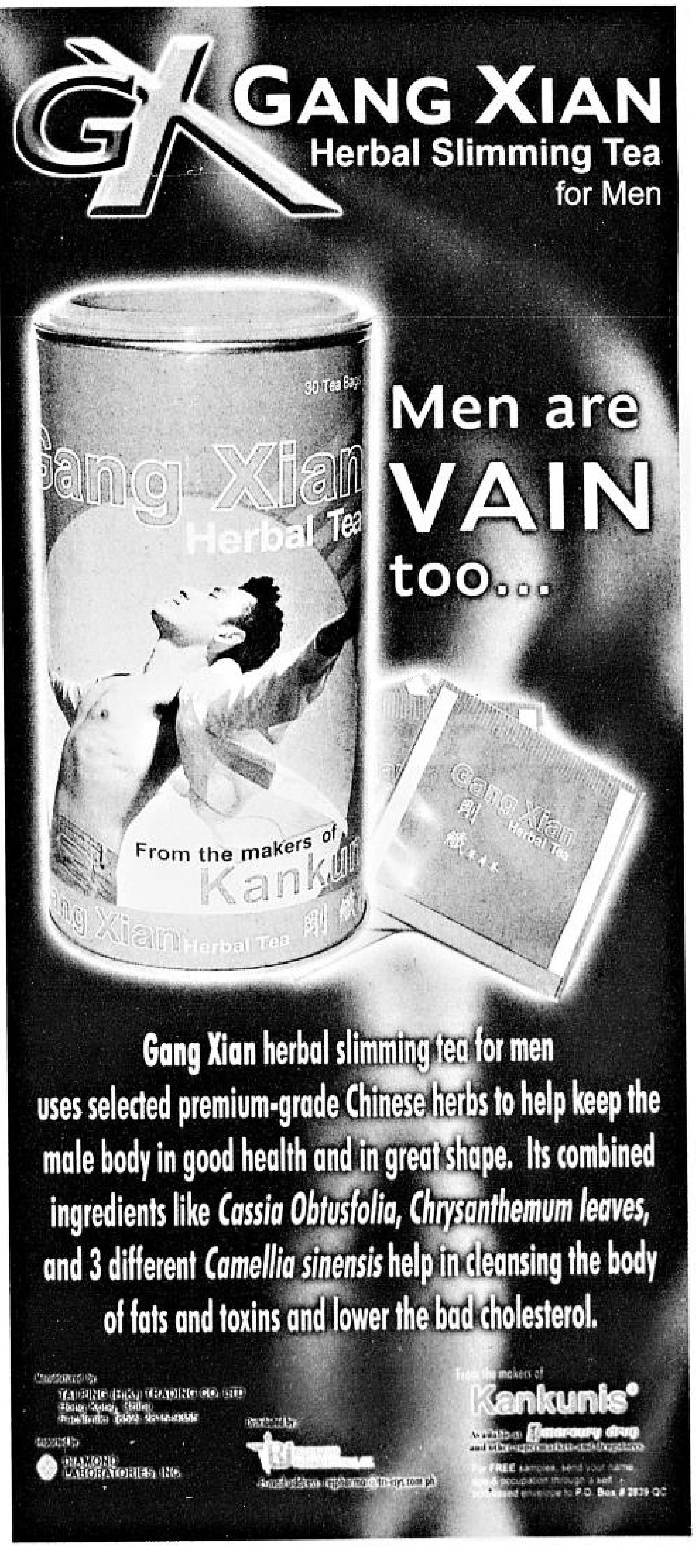

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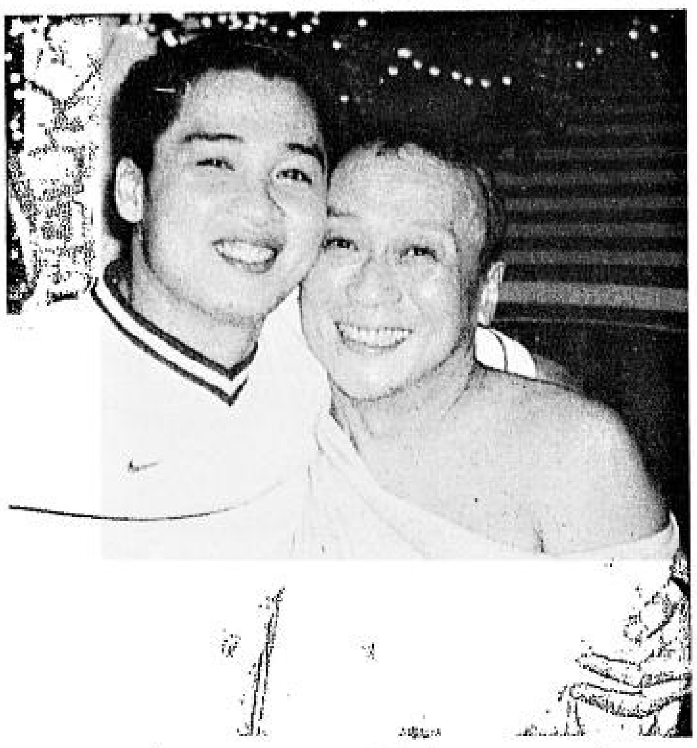

CELEBRATOR Mike Sandro Rieta with business partner and super pal Louie Cruz

NEWLY adopted islander Gigi Li and Leonard Tirol of White House Resort

HEY, it's us! Nenette Graf and Gerri Assis

AMERICAN couple Anna and Steve Zafir jetted in for the party.

SHE'S my best pal. Chuchin Zafarti and Paula Araw prove their point.

NO diving tonight. Seriol Machan, Red Coral's Mike Labatiao and Francis Cabañal

A birthday bash in paradise

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen on Kodak Max

IT'S de rigueur these days to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, product launch and even a wedding on the exotic isle of Boracay, *palanggas*. If God gave Americans Hawaii and the Grand Canyon, He gifted the Philippines with the clear, pristine sands of Boracay, definitely our paradise on earth.

Well-liked and *trés* popular **Mike Sandro Rieta**, super successful owner of Mc Sandro Bistro, one of the Top 10 restaurants in Boracay, celebrated his 33rd birthday with life-long partner, man of the world **Louie Cruz.**

Louie C., one of Manille's top publicists, gamely cooked 14 yummy dishes, including three kinds of perfectly done al dente Risotto; all-time favorite *mechado*; fresh seafood *lumpia*; the popular to-die-for *binagoongan*, gently simmered in young coconut; fresh fat oysters; *pinakbet*; *kare-kare*; and king crabs, also cooked three different ways.

The gastronomic feast was especially prepared for 70 chosen invitees who flew in from Manille, Hong Kong, Milan and even Florida, for Sandro's extra-special, fantastic three-day birthday bash.

Hot-hot invitees included American couple **Steve** and **Ana Zafir**; and Rony Rogoff, the international violinist, with his gorgeous wife, multi-awarded actress **Cherie Gil.** On Sandro's request, Cherie sang the theme song of the movie "Bituing Walang Ningning" to everyone's delight. **Butch Zafarti** and dynamic **Carina Cruz,** top television producers, breezed in with their debutante daughter, **Paula,** and pretty, pretty cousin, **Ava Araw.**

Most of us were billeted in my favorite resort, the renowned Pearl of the Pacific no less, where the young, brilliant southern belle **Rita Sanson** is "princess." Boracay residents, led by **Taj Tajanlangit**; **Bert Mamisao**, president of Seraph Resort; **Paul Sanchez** of Pier 1 and his pal, **Gerard "Chubby" Sanchez; Mike Labatiao** of the most popular dive center in the Visayas, the Red Coral; vivacious **Louisa Lee** of the super popular Jude, drank red wine and toasted with champagne from the well-stocked Ralph's Liquor Store, a skip and hop away from Mc Sandro Resto at D'Mall.

Rains fell now and then, making the evening refreshingly cool. Guests enthusiastically sang, "Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head."

Mc Sandro neighbors, old prints collector **Joel Cruz** and **PJ Exconde** of Bleuvert Boutique, with island girl **Sheila Bienvenida**; Brit "pug" **Bruce**, and American Bulldog **Dickies** toasted Sandro, while biting into the superb, wafer-thin pizzas. Everyone agreed that pizzas served at Mc Sandro can beat any other pizza anywhere.

Gerri Asis and **Nenette Graf** were wild and slap-happy as they listened to **Mari Nabour**, the gifted *sirena* of Boracay who is stationed in Cologne, Germany, sing numbers from "Cabaret," à la Barbra Streisand. Marriageable bachelor **Tito Manapat** of Merchants Bank, who jetted in from the island of Ibiza in Spain, chatted with fashion historian and Metro Magazine's favorite stylist, **Larry Leviste.**

Most roving eyes were fixed on a table with deliciously seductive jetsetter beauties, like master diver **Tet Lara, Hope Floro, Kat Sandejas** and **Doray Cortez.**

Our pal Sandro's birthday was made so memorable by being held in Boracay, his home away from home.

Louie Cruz, in his short welcome speech, said, "On an island one is free from the stress of obsessive-compulsive Manila. You let your hair down, dig your feet into the virgin white sand and have an overdose of pure salty oxygen. Sounds of the waves splashing on the shore make us all children again. We are transported to a happiness we thought we had lost but was really always there for all of us to share. That is the siren song, allure and mystery that is Boracay."

With a smile, I thought to myself—Louie is so right, *palanggas.*

Corn-y affair

The Glorietta Activity Center was the venue for recent celebrity-spotting, although the real star of the show was a kernel of corn.

Decada marked the 10th anniversary of the now popular Taters Enterprises Inc. It was an awesome display of the super success and growth of the store carrying everyone's favorite nibbles—popcorn, peanuts and fries—that is now a multi-branch, multi-brand leader in entertainment fast-food, *palanggas.*

The Decada Awards was the night's highlight, with no less than 10 outstanding magnum business partners as the dazzling stars playing supporting roles.

Celebrity spotting went full-scale right from the start, dahlings, as glamorous reporter, **Lily Chu,** worked the crowd with her camera and microphone. Eye-catching hosts **Sarah Meier** and **Tim Yap** provided a lot of glitz, wearing different clothes every time they appeared on stage.

The award show's entertainment included a surprise intermission number by the Black-Eyed Peas. Everyone grooved to the tune of "Let's Get it Started." The band turned out to be Peas impersonators. Pity!

But the star of the night was the Customer of the Decade, 12-year-old **Nicholas Andrew "Nicky" Price.**

Naturellement, the most-awaited awardees were the Hollywood stars, whose films meant long queues of Taters customers buying munchies in untold amounts. The stars were represented by fantastic impersonators.

The audience included the Miss for all seasons, brilliant columnist and fashionable doll, my *palangga*, **Celine Lopez**; Pepsi's **Felix Yu**; Nestlé's **Manny Paroco**; Ayala Land's **CJ Jesena**; **Myrna Fernandez**; **Cathy Bengzon**, and *simpatico* **Javi Hernandez**; Ayala Cinema's **Raffy Prats**; Warner Brothers' **Francis Soliven**; MTV's **Marc Abaya**; Centex's **Carol Atacador**; Shu Uemura's **Tina Tinio**, hip PR **GP Reyes**, plus other personas too overexposed to be mentioned, dahlings.

Taters' founder and president, **Annie Tanchanco**, expressed her gratitude to everyone and the hope of a brighter future. "Decada is Taters then... now... and an optimistic thereafter."

The magnificent show and spectacular musical finale was produced by Chimara's brilliant, super talented **JP Tanchanco.**

Thanks to their brilliant and creative marketing, the story of how a small corn kernel became what it is today after a Decada was colorfully told.

HEADTURNERS Doray Cortez and Kat Sandejas

SUPER eyecatcher Hope Floro

CAT eyes. Lina Basas

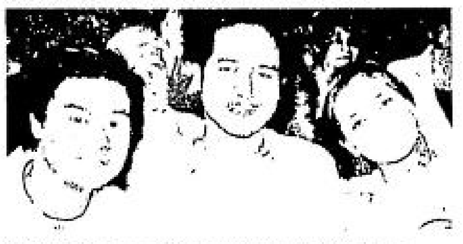
WE love Boracay. Internationally renowned violinist Rony Rogoff and wife, multi-awarded movie and TV star Cherie Gil Rogoff

LET'S party. Fun Patrick Higgins, top man of Bazura

THE EMCEE of the night, talented Larry Leviste

LIKE my dimples? A happy Gerard Red

SUPER presenters: Head Zone's Sol Salao and drop-dead handsome Jake Roxas


PEPSI'S gang of three: Raymond Mabasa, marketing manager for flavors; Gino Cruz, BBDO and Guerrero-Ortega account manager, and image model Celine Lopez

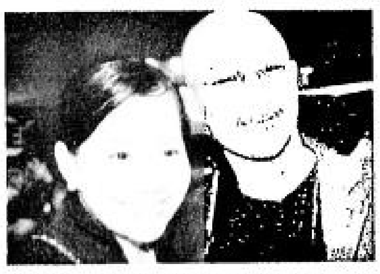
THE LADY behind the whopping success of Taters, Annie Tanchanco, with hotshot Tater follower Rep. Butz Aquino

THE FANTASTIC Akafellas welcomes the invitees.

TATERS Decada Award presenters: Segafredo's Ernie Fajardo, Rafael Rosell and Iya Villania

PRESENTERS Bart Guingona and Audie Gemora

ALIYA Parcs and Angel Jacob


THE MAGNIFICENT show producer, Chimara's JP Tanchanco, with guest Giselle Segovia

THE BEAUTY and brains behind the popular S2 Foods, Ana Ugarte, with mega restaurateur Peter Jentes of Schwarzwalder

Bias against paranormal phenomenon persists

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

THE HEATED arguments by readers from several countries regarding the controversial photos of the Cottingley fairies I wrote about in my last two columns have once again brought to the forefront the ingrained bias of some people against paranormal and supernatural phenomena.

The very mention of the topic makes some people cringe or raise skeptical eyebrows.

A certain degree of skepticism is good and necessary in these cases because there is a very good chance we may be deceived or made fun of. But there must be some objective or impartial criteria by which we can judge the authenticity or validity of an extraordinary event that may defy all known laws of science, logic and common sense.

I have often observed that people by and large are more easily persuaded to believe that a paranormal event is fraudulent or a product of deception rather than genuine, even before thoroughly investigating or examining it, merely because the phenomenon defies well established scientific explanation.

Simpler explanation

The more philosophical often quote Occam's Razor, which essentially states we should not explain an event by a higher or complicated principle if a lower and simple explanation will do. I agree completely.

But sometimes our eagerness—or, perhaps stubbornness—to stick to conventional wisdom and to what is familiar to us may lead us to the wrong conclusion and thereby impede scientific knowledge. Let me give a few examples.

In the local scene, one of the most controversial healing phenomena is psychic surgery, a type of faith healing traditionally practiced by Filipinos. Several investigators, both western and local, have declared the practice to be nothing more than sleight-of-hand or trickery.

Televised confession

One confessed former psychic surgeon, after being converted to a religious sect, went on television to denounce all psychic surgery to be fake, and even demonstrated how he hid a small blade between his fingers to cut the flesh of patients.

Almost everybody believed him because he used to be a psychic surgeon. But in the same television program, several of his patients who have had tumors removed or diabetes or paralysis cured, testified on how this person operated on them without pain, and they were cured.

What are we to conclude, therefore? These are simply explained as "placebo effect" or "spontaneous remission of illness."

Scientifically proven

I have two pathological laboratory test results of specimens taken out by two different healers from patients' bodies. I was present during these two operations, and the specimens were examined by two highly respected hospitals in the country. One is a lymph node adenoma excision done by healer Alex Orbito on a former officemate of mine at Filipinas Synthetic Fiber Corp. The specimen was brought to the University of Santo Tomas Hospital for examination and was proved to be genuine.

The other specimen is a kidney stone removed through bare-hand psychic surgery by the late healer Benjie Balacano from a Spanish woman who was three months pregnant. Her husband and I were present during this operation. The specimen that was taken out was sent to the Makati Medical Center and found to be "urate crystals," a type of kidney stone.

So even if all psychic surgery is declared to be completely fraudulent, I stand by these two cases as completely genuine because I have medical proof beyond reasonable doubt. Medical scientists must be able to explain to me how these two healers were able to produce these two genuine specimens out of nowhere.

E-mail reactions to this column to jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph. Listen to my radio program, 7-8 p.m. every Sunday over dzMM at 630 khz on the AM radio band

Two cases of psychic surgery are completely genuine because I have medical proof beyond reasonable doubt

What makes food fattening?

From page D1

Food preparation

Cooking or preparation can make food fattening. Here are examples that all weigh 3.5 oz. Boiled potatoes have 62 calories while French fries have 328 calories. Boiled bananas have 159 calories while *turon* (wrapped, sugared and fried) has 259. Sardines in tomato sauce contain 127 calories while those in oil have 372. Tuna flakes in brine have 95 calories while those in oil have 309.

Liquid calories

Rolls discovered that hunger and thirst were separate and distinct. Liquid (water or another beverage) will quench your thirst but will not satisfy your hunger.

Milk-based drinks and those with some protein are the exception. They will help you feel full and eat less because milk turns into semi-solid in the stomach, while protein keeps you satisfied longer than fat or carbohydrates.

Liquid calories in soft drinks, commercial iced tea, lemonade mixes and fruit drinks (artificially flavored, highly sweetened) are fattening. You will still eat the same amount of food if you drink a high-calorie beverage with your meal.

Refined carbohydrates

When your blood sugar levels rise and fall quickly when eating a meal of refined processed carbohydrates (having *pancit* and rice in the same meal), you tend to become hungry faster and eat more at your next meal.

Thus, refined carbs can be regarded as fattening. Ideally, you should choose whole grain starchy carbs like brown rice, which has more nutrients and fiber, takes longer to digest, and doesn't raise your blood sugar levels.

Eat protein and plenty of vegetables with your starch to blunt the rise in blood sugar and to feel satisfied longer.

"In Fitness & In Health" has a new time slot—8-8:30 a.m., Monday to Friday on Studio 23.

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info

Dry Skin
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Healthy Hand Essentials
Healthy Body Complexion

Promo gives salon discounts

ACTIVE women perform several roles simultaneously—wife, mother, friend and career woman. With the many demands on their time, their hands and feet often have to undergo a lot of "torture."

A healthy and radiant skin is essential to looking and feeling one's best, and the hands and feet are as much in need of pampering as the rest of the body.

Vaseline Lotion, the skin care specialist from Unilever, understands the many needs of a woman. With David's, the largest beauty salon chain in the country, it has launched the promo "Treats for your Hands and Feet."

Until Nov. 15, Vaseline Lotion invites women to pamper themselves by purchasing a 100 ml/200 ml of any of the following Vaseline lotion variants: Vaseline Deep Nourishing, Vaseline Moisture Soft, Vaseline Anti-Bacterial and Vaseline White and Clear lotion at any Watson's, Robinsons Supermarket and Big R branches. Every purchase entitles them to a 25-percent discount for manicure, pedicure and foot spa at David's Salon, David's Day Spa, Red Salon, David's Prestige and Rever Salon.

Take Charge Doc!

Dr. Nicky S. Montoya

Take Charge Doc! is your weekly question and answer guide on general health issues and illnesses. MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. And in a common thrust with the campaigns of the government, Take Charge Doc! parallels its features on the Calendar of Health Events of the Department of Health.

What is the routine schedule of immunization for infants?

Infant vaccination begins at birth with BCG, an attenuated strain of M. Bovis bacteria, to fight against primary complex. Hepatitis B vaccine, also administered at birth up to 2 months, is given in 3 doses. The second dose is injected after 30 days to 4 months and the 3rd dose 6 month after the first shot. Booster dose is recommended every 5 years. For infants born to Hepatitis B infected mothers, human Hepatitis BIG (antibody) is given within 12 hours after birth. If this vaccine is not available, Hepatitis B vaccine is started, followed by another dose a week after and 2 more doses at 30 days to 4 month interval. Between the 6th week to 2nd month, Hib vaccine is recommended which protects against Hemophilus influenza type B bacteria. The vaccine is given with an interval of 1-2 months completing 3 doses, with 1 booster dose after 12 months. On the 2nd month, immunization of DPT provides combined protection against diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus. As primary immunization, 3 doses each are administered at least 4-6 weeks apart. Live attenuated oral poliomyelitis vaccine given as preventive vaccination against poliomyelitis with primary immunization of 3 doses of 2 drops each orally. It is started 60 days after birth with the succeeding doses similar to DPT immunization.

At the age of 9 months, a single dose of measles vaccine is given. As the baby grows older, that is 13th to 15th month, several vaccines are recommended, such as MMR (measles, mumps & German measles), Hepatitis A, Chicken Pox, Meningoccocus, Influenza, and Typhoid Fever. In case a scheduled dose is missed, it is not necessary to reinitiate the series but completion of required doses is important.

Dr. Carmen C. Custodio provides us with this week's answer to our feature question on the immunization schedule for infants. Dr. Custodio is specializes in Pediatrics and has had more than 14 years of clinical experience. She hails from the college of Medicine of Manila Central University and took her pediatric residency at Mary Chiles General Hospital. Members may visit her for their consultation needs at Room 8 of Sta. Teresita General Hospital, Mondays to Saturdays, from 10:30 AM to 4 PM. Sta. Teresita Hospital is located at corner D. Tuazon and N Roasa Sts., Quezon City.

BE HEARD AND BE READ. Write to DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA (c/o *TAKE CHARGE DOC!*) or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for inquiries on health matters.

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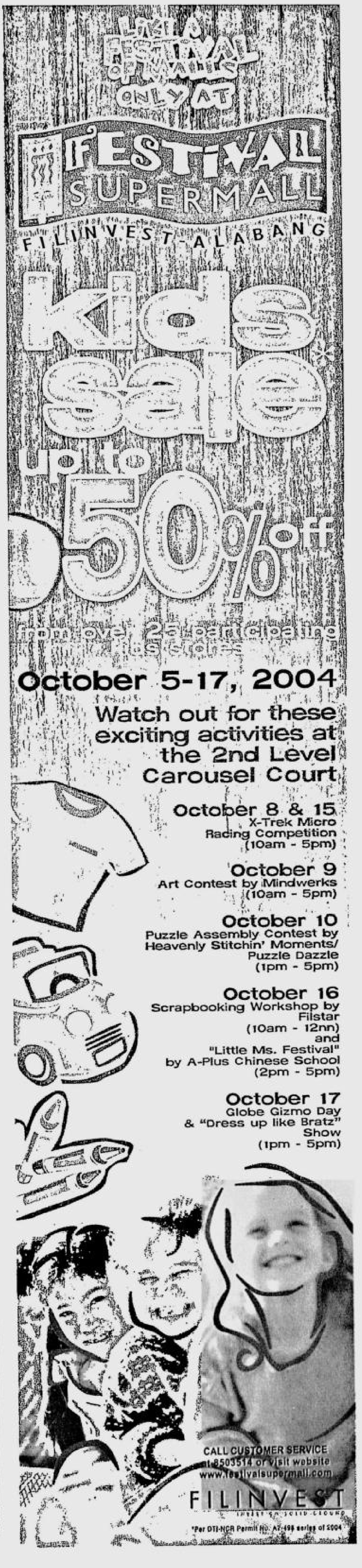
ISDI Renews MEDICard HMO Plan

IBM SOLUTIONS DELIVERY, INC. (ISDI), one of the leading solutions provider in the information technology industry today signed recently the renewal contract of its corporate healthcare agreement with MEDICard. Present during the signing were (seated L-R) MEDICard's Amy Cuyugan (Account Mngr.) & Dr. Nicanor Montoya (Pres.) ISDI's Emmanuel Mendoza (Pres. & Managing Dir.), Ma. Cristina Regalado (Fin. Mngr.) and Nicky Enriquez (HR & Staff Services Mngr.) (Standing L-R) MEDICard's Voltaire Victoria (Mktg. & Sales Mngr.) & Miriam Villafuerte (Mktg. Services Mngr.), ISDI's Glenda Garcia (Staff Services Team Leader & HR Partner) Marina Bravo (HR Team Leader) Florence Villones (HR Partner) & Ryan Marin (RDL/HR Partner)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Fortified milk is best for kids

By Rowena C. Burgos

THERE are many different milk brands in the market, with a range of health claims and benefits that may or may not be backed up by scientific research. Some consumers, in fact, have expressed concern at such claims on children's milk products.

Due to the pressing need for such objective, clinical evidence, New Zealand Milk funded and supported a study on the value of milk to children. The study shows that leading childhood diseases like diarrhea and pneumonia can be prevented by feeding children milk fortified with a specific combination of nutrients.

The results of the trial were first unveiled during the World Congress of Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition in July held in Paris. The research team was led by Prof. Sunil Sazawal, associate research professor at the Department of International Health, Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, USA, and director at the Center for Micronutrient Research, Annamalai University in India.

"This is the first time a study of this scale has been conducted to evaluate the effects of specific fortifications of milk on growth and morbidity in young children. The study is unique and important in two aspects. Firstly, in terms of overall high-quality design, it sets new benchmarks for proving the health claims made on children's milk. Secondly, it has provided clinical evidence that particular fortified milks can greatly impact on prevention of anemia, burden of common acute illnesses in childhood and their growth," says Prof. Sazawal, who's also an expert in child nutrition.

A study shows that leading childhood diseases can be prevented by feeding children milk enhanced with nutrients

Research milestone

Unlike most other trials on milk, explains Sazawal, the New Zealand Milk study adhered strictly to internationally accepted criteria used for rigorous clinical human health research trials. It was conducted on 636 children aged 12-36 months.

The children were assigned randomly into two groups. Group 1 consisted of children who received Anchor 1+ with Nutri-care, milk fortified with Vitamins A, C, E and minerals iron, zinc and selenium. Group 2 was made up of children who received the same milk but without Nutri-care. The children consumed a minimum of two glasses of milk each day for 12 months.

The study was conducted on children from a lower middle-class residential area in Sangam Vihar, India, which has a high level of literacy and employment. Only children who were healthy and had no chronic illnesses were enrolled in the study.

But children who fell ill during the trial were given access to a free medical clinic run by experienced doctors, and the children were treated with suitable medication. An external safety monitoring group was commissioned by New Zealand Milk to provide objective advice on issues of safety throughout the trial, ensuring that the children's health and safety came first at all times.

Better protected

The study, Sazawal said, found that children who consumed Anchor 1+ with Nutricare were significantly better protected against diarrhea and acute lower respiratory infections like pneumonia compared to children who consumed a milk powder containing natural levels of the same nutrients.

According to the World Health Organization, diarrhea is a leading cause of sickness and death globally among children aged 2 years and below. The disease causes excessive loss of water in children, resulting in dehydration which may prove fatal. Loss of nutrients through diarrhea can also cause children to become weak and malnourished, affecting their physical growth and lowering their body's resistance to diseases.

Acute respiratory infection (ARI), which includes diseases such as pneumonia, is another leading cause of death worldwide in young children. In 2000, ARI killed approximately 2 million children under the age of 5 in developing countries alone.

But the study showed that children consuming Anchor 1+ with Nutri-care were 22 percent better protected against diarrhea, 18 percent better protected against acute lower respiratory infections and 32 percent better protected against severe respiratory infections.

Anchor 1+ with Nutri-care was 3.42 times more effective in preventing the development of anemia. Children were better protected against the development of moderate anemia by 74 percent and against the development of severe anemia by 87 percent.

ANCHOR I + with Nutri-care is clinically proven to help improve height and weight gains.

"Lack of any truly effective and affordable preventive vaccine, for both diarrhea and respiratory infections, has aroused interest in food-based preventive interventions. In recent years, increasing recognition and evidence regarding essential vitamins and minerals, as both preventive and therapeutic agents against infections, have made them a potential candidate for food-based prevention strategies," says Sazawal.

The New Zealand Milk findings, he says, supports the use of daily intake of milk with nutrient bundles of Nutri-care as a practical way of building natural defenses in kids, and preventing common but potentially lethal childhood diseases.

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph

PROF. Sunil Sazawal

Male grooming's mythical five

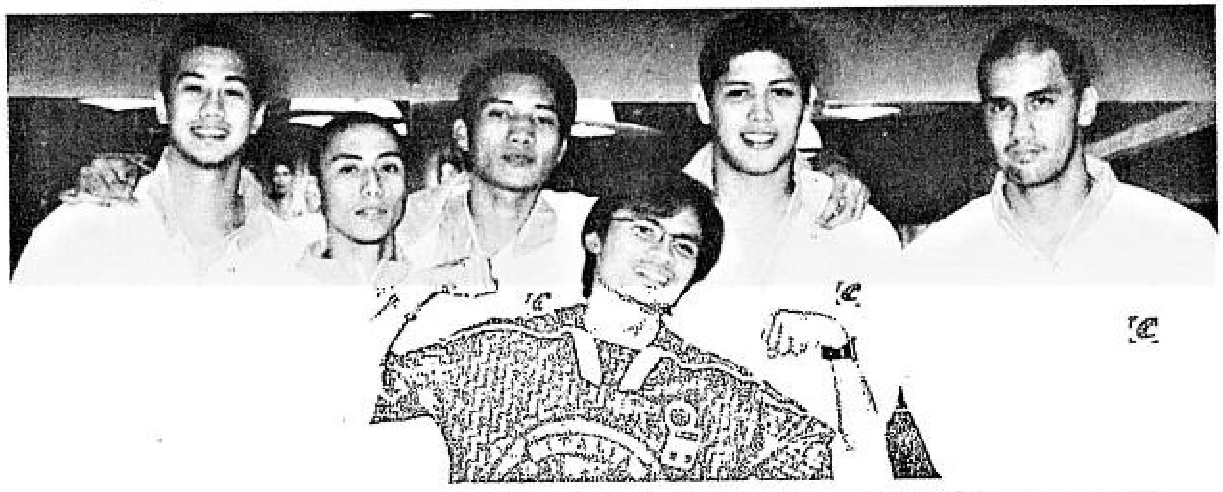
By Michael Dizon Garcia
Contributor

A SKILLFUL basketball player should be quick, sharp, smooth, solid and strong. So should a shaver be.

But what has basketball got to do with shaving? Well, Gillette, the world leader in male grooming, recently introduced the Gillette Vector First Five. This new team of young endorsers is composed of former University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP) and now Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) hotshots, namely Rich Alvarez, Wesley Gonzales, Enrico Villanueva, Paul Artadi and James Yap.

"Locally, Rich, Wesley, Enrico, Paul and James are considered the best a young athlete can be, and the best a man can get," says Gillette business manager Ramon Alcasid.

True enough, these five have already earned rare honors at such an early point in their careers. Former Ateneo Blue Eagle Alvarez was the PBA's 2004 first overall draft pick. UE Warrior Artadi was the 2003 Championship League's MVP. Blue Eagle Gonzales was the 2002 Championship Series MVP while teammate Villanueva was the regular season's MVP. Warrior Yap later inherited Villanueva's MVP throne in UAAP's 2003 season.



THE AUTHOR with the Gillette Vector First Five: Wesley Gonzales, Paul Artadi, James Yap, Enrico Villanueva and Rich Alvarez

MICHAEL GARCIA

The launching of the Vector First Five was held at the Gold's Gym in Glorietta 3. After being introduced, the cagers participated in a pre-basketball training exercise. Coming to the gym unshaved, they were later led to the shaving stations where they were shorn of their facial shadows using the Vector twin-blade shaving system and other Gillette products.

Alvarez had the thickest facial hair, so the crowd had fun watching him get shaved. Afterward, he had a delighted expression when he saw himself in the mirror, groomed.

"*Kailangan malinis ang itsura mo bago mag*-basketball *para maayos din ang* mindset *mo habang naglalaro*," says Yap. To this, Artadi agrees. "Important *sa mga* fans *namin na* we look our best."

Gonzales, who admits to enjoy chatting with a lot of people off the court, adds, "I like meeting new people and talking to everyone, so I always groom to look my best. After all, looks count, too."

The 'ber' months and arthritis

A COMMON myth is that the so-called "ber" months (September, October, November and December) mean arthritis or *rayuma* will again make life difficult for those who suffer from it.

The myth has medical basis, says Dr. Juan Javier T. Lichauco of the Rheumatology Allergy and Immunology Center of St. Luke's Medical Center, a diagnostic and treatment facility for the three major health problems. Lichauco says arthritic patients seem to suffer more pain during cold months because of the change in barometric pressure in the afflicted joints.

Dr. Lichauco, who says there are only 65 rheumatologists in the country today, wants people to understand there are more than 100 types of arthritis and soft tissue rheumatism.

Some are curable, some are not. A form of curable arthritis is gout, which is caused by an increase in uric acid. It can be prevented through proper medication.

Other problems include rheumatoid arthritis (RA), the most dreaded type due to its deforming and crippling consequences. It is common among middle-aged women. Affected areas like the shoulders, elbows, wrists, hands and knees can be inflamed all at the same time, with symptoms ranging from redness, swelling, pain and warmth. Inflammation is symmetric, with joints of both sides of the body affected.

Dr. Lichauco says early diagnosis is the key in preventing progression and disability. Juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, which affects children, can be very disabling. If left untreated, it can stunt growth.

As people advance in age, the most common type of arthritis is osteoarthritis. Overweight and certain types of individuals may also develop it due to the increased load to their knee joints. The nature of their jobs, like athletes, can also make some persons vulnerable to this kind of problem.

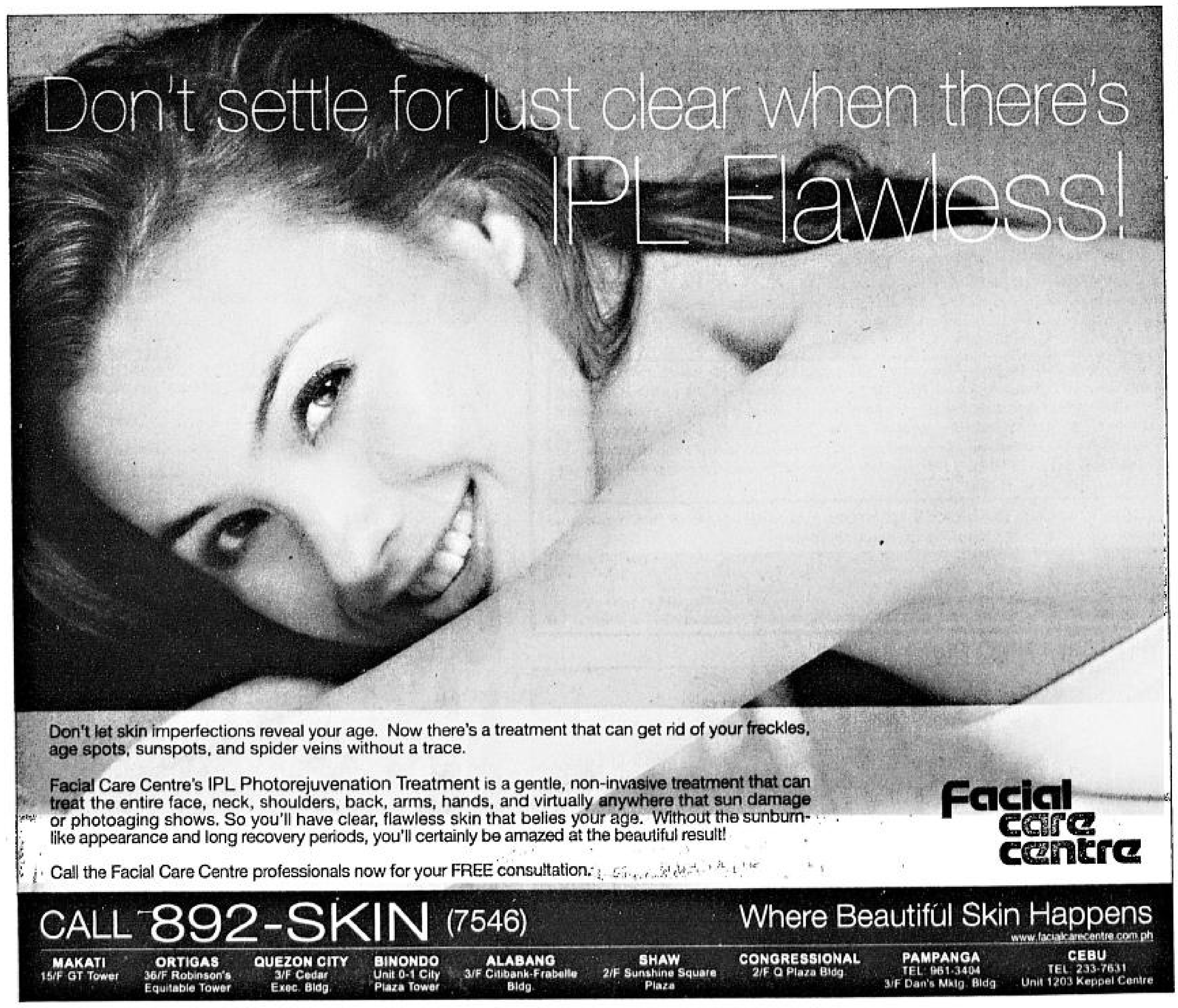
Cartilage breakdown from wear and tear is seen in osteoarthritis. It is characterized by bony enlargement of the affected joint. Like other forms of arthritis, it may hamper the daily activities of patients.

Though there are medicines that can control and alter the course of arthritis, the most important thing to do is to consult first a rheumatologist to establish the presence of the disease.

Dr. Lichauco also advises arthritic patients to maintain an ideal body weight, undergo some lifestyle modification and, most importantly, have some form of low-impact exercise like swimming, biking (even stationary bikes will do) and brisk walking.

Physical therapy is an important aspect of treating patients with arthritis. It involves exercises to improve muscle strength and procedures like ultrasound and paraffin wax to restore mobility. In severe cases, surgery is required to alleviate pain and improve function.

Call St. Luke's Rheumatology, Allergology and Immunology Center at 7230101 local 4725.



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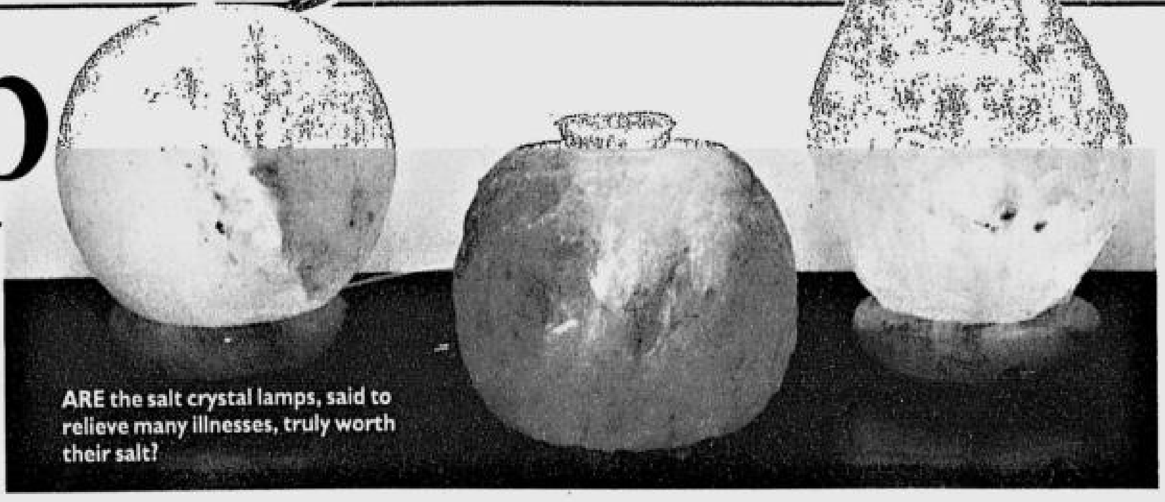
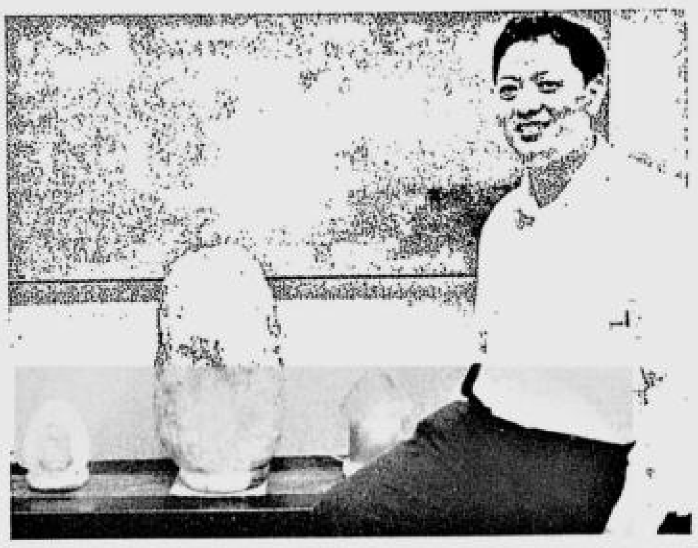
Light a lamp for good health



ARE the salt crystal lamps, said to relieve many illnesses, truly worth their salt?

By emitting negative ions, salt crystals are supposed to make the air we breathe cleaner

Text by Anne A. Jambora
Photos by Betoy Johnson



NG Yan Peng, managing director of Glomedic Sdn. Bhd., says he stopped taking medication for his sinusitis after a month of keeping the salt crystal lamp plugged in.

HUMAN beings will survive weeks without food, a few days without water, but only minutes without air—oxygen, to be precise. But the air we breathe is now increasingly contaminated by toxins resulting from human activities.

From dust to cigarette smoke, car to factory emissions, paints to fabric chemicals, air conditioners to televisions, so much noxious waste gets into the air we breathe. Even household necessities like floor wax and disinfectants contribute to the problem.

Ailments caused by air pollution are increasing, so the demand for air purifiers is rising. Many air filtration products have been introduced into the market but it seems that the "rage" nowadays are ion-generating machines. The machines work by producing a continuous flow of negative ions that charge and bind together airborne particles/allergens, causing them to fall to the ground in clumps.

Bacteria killer

Dr. Albert P. Krueger, a microbiologist and experimental pathologist at the University of California in Berkeley, found that a small amount of negative ions could kill bacteria in the air, thus, preventing infection.

"Negative ions mean fresh oxygen in your room," says Ng Yan Peng, managing director of Glomedic Sdn. Bhd. in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Glomedic is the exclusive distributor of salt crystal lamps, natural air-ionizing products made of 100 percent solid crystalline salt that is supposed to be over 200 million years old.

The crystalline salt, mined at more than 2,600 ft in Asia and Europe, is said to be completely safe for human consumption. (Table salt, bleached white, generally comes from the sea.)

The concept of salt crystal lamps was inspired by alternative medicine practices in Central and Eastern Europe and Russia called speleotherapy. Patients with respiratory problems were treated by letting them breathe the damp, thick air in caves or salt mines for about three hours each visit for two to three months.

Brisk sales

While this approach needs more scientific studies, salt crystal lamps have been selling like hot cakes in Malaysia since they were introduced two years ago. More than 150,000 units have been sold so far to people who believe they can help improve their lives because of the negative ions they generate, the so-called "vitamins in the air."

Research seems to support the view that negative ions can improve not just people's physical health but their mood as well. It suggests that waterfalls, for instance, whose negative ions count are among the highest at up to 100,000 per cubic centimeter, have a dramatic effect on people's overall well-being. A body of water, in fact, was established to have one of the highest ratio of negative to positive ions.

This may be why people like taking long showers—it makes them feel good.

Negative ions are therapeutic partly because they kill germs, a function similar to sterilizing the air. By continuously emitting negative ions, Ng says the Glomedic salt crystal lamps reduce many indoor air pollutants such as pet dander, hairspray, bacteria, mold spores, viruses, dust, smoke, etc.

Relief for aches, pains

Ng says an environment with a healthy dose of negative ions can relieve people of allergies, asthma, sinusitis, hay fever and even migraine; and burn and postoperative pains. It also reduces susceptibility to colds and flu, and enhances the immune system, accelerates the blood's delivery of oxygen into the cells and tissues, increases alertness, work productivity and concentration; and improves the lungs' capacity.

Unfortunately, a typical urban setting generates only 250-750 negative ions per cubic centimeter (ccm). The minimal amount needed for optimum human functioning is about 1,000/ccm.

Exhaust from vehicles, including dust and soot, among other pollutants, either neutralize or positively charge the ions. Steel and concrete buildings, along with clothing, furniture covers, air conditioners, plastics, etc., absorb negative ions, reducing their amount indoors to less than 100/ccm.

"We live in an electrical world, with gadgets like microwave, television, cell phones, computers, radios, etc. that produce positive ions. It is good to have the salt crystal lamp nearby to neutralize the electromagnetic radiation," Ng says. The Glomedic salt crystal lamps, he adds, can increase the negative ions count by up to 300 percent.

Ng says because of salt crystal lamps, he was able to stop taking medication for his sinusitis after a month. It has been three years since he last took the pills.

Therapeutic colors

Salt crystal lamps are also useful in color therapy to enhance emotional well-being. Ng says people react differently to different colors: White creates a sense of peace, orange is good for de-stressing. All lamps come in their natural color. "Our cells are absorbing these light waves to nourish our body," Ng says.

He adds that the lamp's effect depends on how healthy a person is. Some people are severely allergic to or simply intolerant of chemicals so the results can be very dramatic. But even healthy people need negative ions. Ng says the human body benefits from taking in a lot of good, clean air.

The Glomedic salt crystal lamp is low maintenance. Just wipe it with a damp cloth to clean it, and remember to keep it plugged in 24 hours a day. (It has a tiny 15-watt bulb that will not increase your monthly electric bill dramatically.) As the bulb gets warmer, the salt crystals are heated and negative ions are released into the air.

THE LAMPS come in their natural colors.

Since salt absorbs moisture, turning off the lamp for a long period can melt the entire lamp. To keep it dry when not in use, always wrap the lamp in plastic.

The Glomedic salt crystal lamp is exclusively distributed by Glomedic Phils. Inc. and is available at the Tomlinson Collection and Raffles Fine Arts, Jupiter Street, Bel-Air, Makati; Pineapple, G/F Greenbelt 3; Leo Espiñosa showroom, Palm Village, Makati; Artesian Waterworks, The Podium, Ortigas Center; and Westin Sports Club and Spa. Call 523-4099.

E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph

Children suffer in silence

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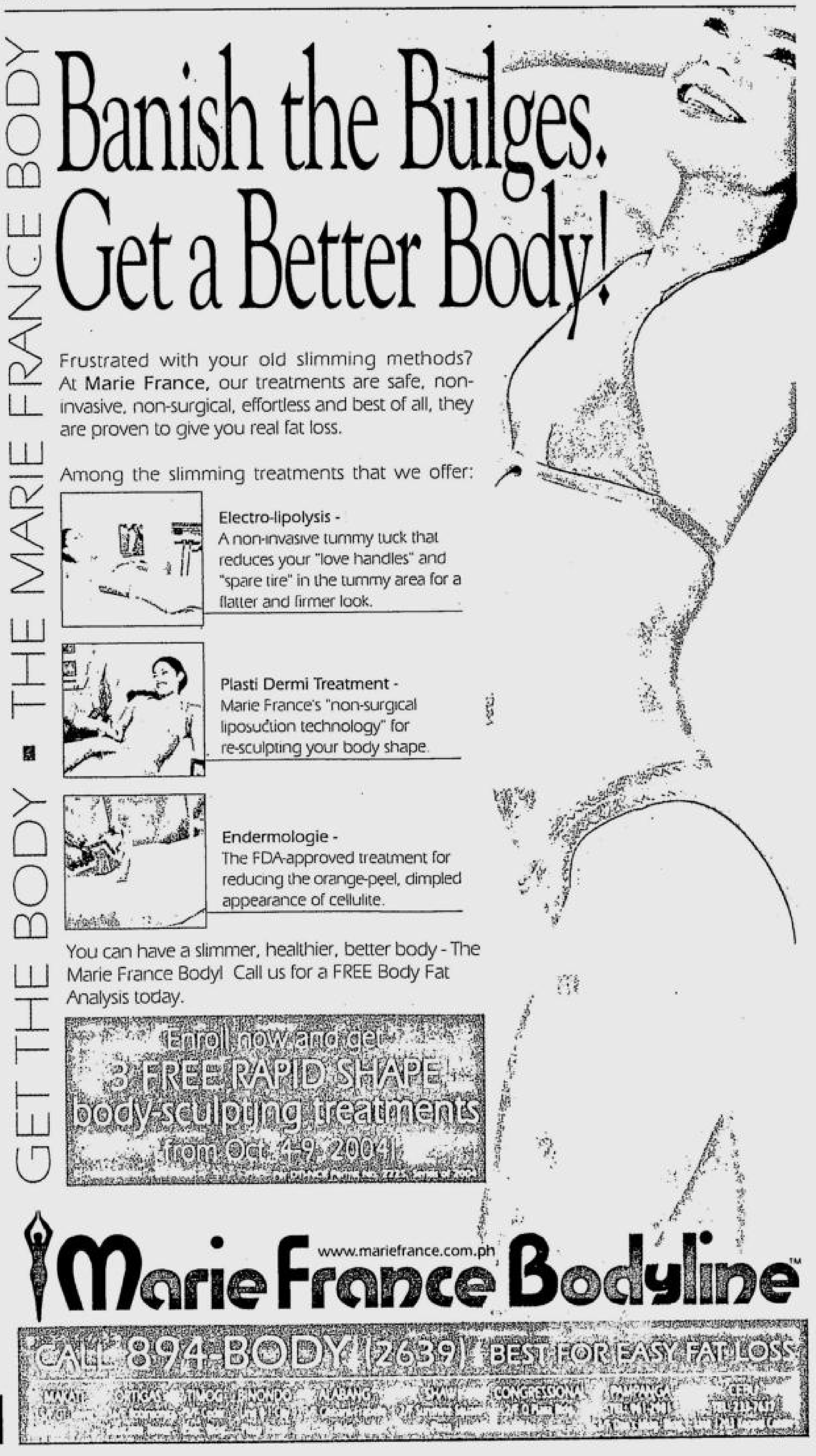

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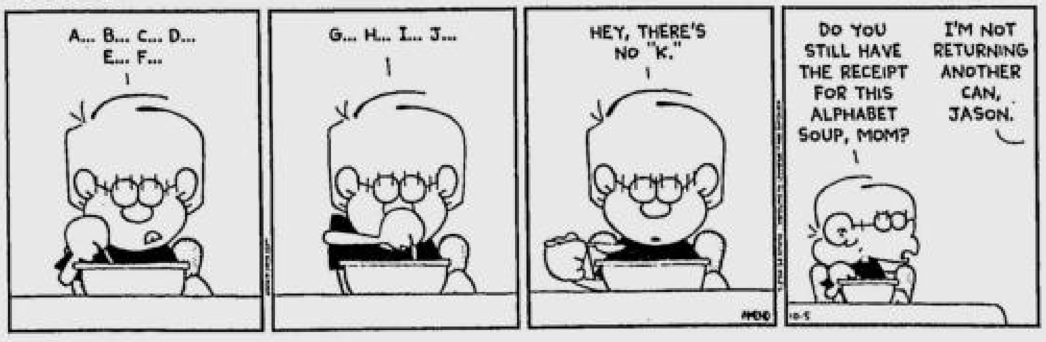
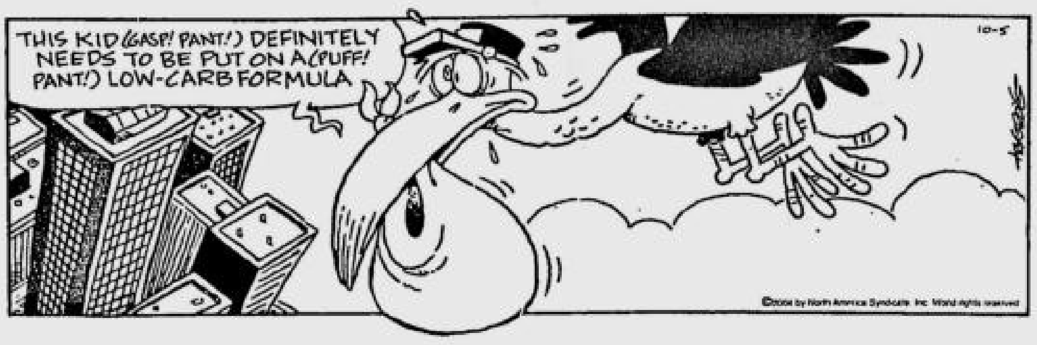

A... B... C... D... E... F...
G... H... I... J...
HEY, THERE'S NO "K."
DO YOU STILL HAVE THE RECEIPT FOR THIS ALPHABET SOUP, MOM?
I'M NOT RETURNING ANOTHER CAN, JASON.
AMEND
10-5

MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


THIS KID (GASP! PANT!) DEFINITELY NEEDS TO BE PUT ON A (PUFF! PANT!) LOW-CARB FORMULA
10-5
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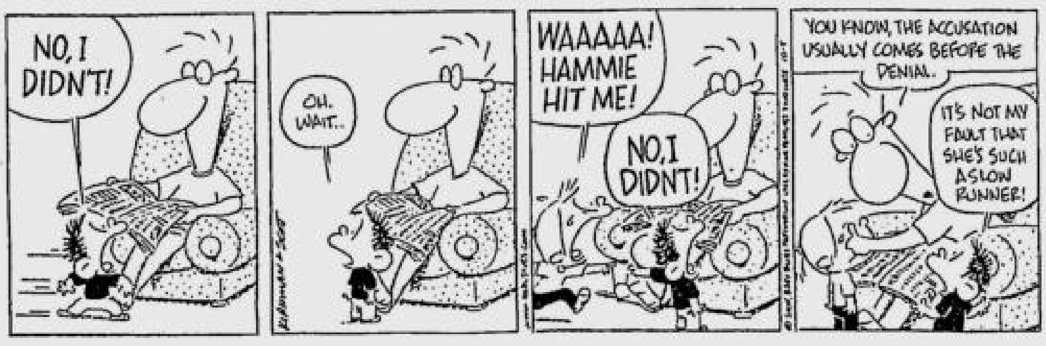
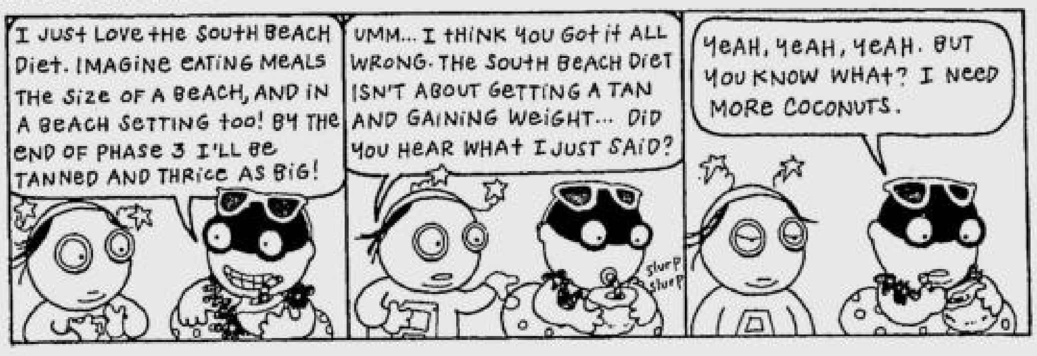
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


NO, I DIDN'T!
OH. WAIT..
WAAAAA! HAMMIE HIT ME!
NO, I DIDN'T!
YOU KNOW, THE ACCUSATION USUALLY COMES BEFORE THE DENIAL.
IT'S NOT MY FAULT THAT SHE'S SUCH A SLOW RUNNER!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I JUST LOVE THE SOUTH BEACH DIET. IMAGINE EATING MEALS THE SIZE OF A BEACH, AND IN A BEACH SETTING TOO! BY THE END OF PHASE 3 I'LL BE TANNED AND THRICE AS BIG!
UMM... I THINK YOU GOT IT ALL WRONG. THE SOUTH BEACH DIET ISN'T ABOUT GETTING A TAN AND GAINING WEIGHT... DID YOU HEAR WHAT I JUST SAID?
slurp slurp
YEAH, YEAH, YEAH. BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? I NEED MORE COCONUTS.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a strong sense of justice and fair play. Wherever possible, you will champion the truth. You are a networker extraordinaire. Even though you're fun-loving, you always put the interests of those you care about before your own. You truly like to benefit others. An important choice awaits you this year. **Birthdate of:** Bob Geldof, rock musician; Kate Winslet, actress; Steve Miller, musician.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Conversations with others go extremely well today. In large measure, this is because you feel empathetic and sympathetic with others right now.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're prepared to help a co-worker today. You're prepared to do this even if it means speaking up to your boss or other authority figures. (Noble.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a wonderfully creative day for you. Do anything involving arts and crafts if possible. It's also a very romantic, idealistic day for lovers.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): A family member needs your help today. Fortunately, you're in the mood to give it without hesitation. You know that if you were in the same situation, you would want somebody to help you.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're definitely prepared to help others today, especially siblings or a partner. You see that there's nothing wrong with meeting somebody halfway.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You can't resist spending money on luxury and something quite wonderful today. It has your name on it! However, some of you will give money to those who are needy and less fortunate.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You are far more sensitive than usual today. Because of this, you pick up on the mood of others very quickly. (If you offer advice to anyone, it is certainly given with sincerity.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Your creative imagination is hot! You might spend a lot of time daydreaming and sort of mentally drifting. This makes it a bit tough to do serious work that requires concentration.

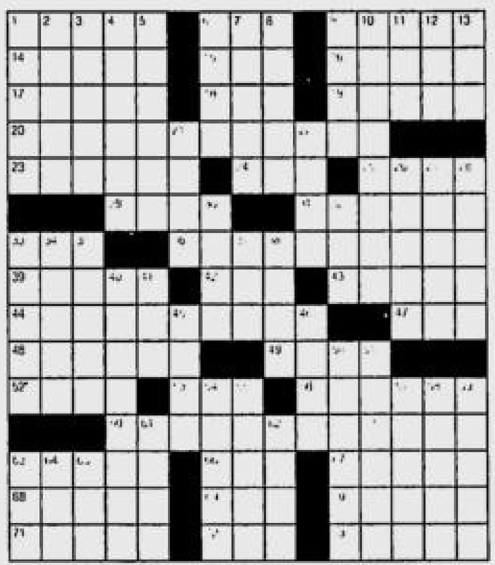
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is a good day to talk to others about your dreams and hopes for the future. For one thing, you're thinking about them. And for another, you want to know what others think. Go for it!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): The advice you get from others (especially your boss) might not be particularly practical. Too many people are full of wishful thinking today.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is the perfect day to study art, religion, poetry, music or anything spiritual and philosophical that appeals to you. You're interested in beauty and mysticism no matter how briefly.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is the perfect day to escape somewhere. You don't feel much like working. Actually, nobody does. Kick back and relax if you can.

DAILY CROSSWORD



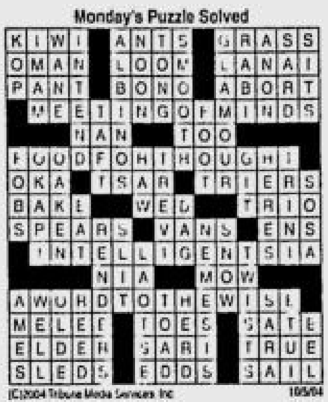
By John Underwood
New York, NY

10/5/04

ACROSS
1 Evidence unit?
6 High spirits
9 Wet-eyed
14 Zigzag
15 5th or Lex.
16 Over and above
17 Not of this world
18 Connect
19 __ salts
20 Revere's route
23 Part of USPS
24 Silvery gray
25 Letter opener?
29 Metal waste
31 Laudanum, e.g.
33 Pol's cash provider
36 Howard Hawks movie, with "The"
39 Bitterly pungent
42 Chairman of China
43 Singer Reese
44 Mad dogs and Englishmen's time?
47 Not forthright
48 Pilotless planes
49 Pin down
52 Part of A.D.
53 Pull along
56 Slithered
60 Rod Serling's stomping ground
63 Knickknack
66 Altar vow
67 Emanations
68 First in quality
69 Erich __ Stroheim
70 Abrupt, sharp sound
71 Machu Picchu locale
72 Cote mama
73 Shades

DOWN
1 Engulf
2 Sun: pref.
3 Forays
4 Meet parts
5 Not-guilty plea
6 Woodland way
7 Lupone role
8 Jury members
9 Unwanted plant
10 Facilitate
11 "The X-Files" extras
12 Lion, Tiger or Bear, e.g.
13 Tasty tuber
21 Pleased
22 Acronym of a restaurant chain
26 Warren and Scruggs
27 Bikini, for one
28 Team race
30 Ill-smelling
32 Palm of a paw
33 Bamboo lover
34 Oak fruit
35 Sing like Bing
37 Used to be
38 Person, place or thing
40 Before you know it
41 HST's successor
45 Italian wine region
46 Writer Ogden
50 Unbroken
51 Lapis __
54 Martini garnish
55 Surviving wife
57 Sacred Islamic text
58 Pass into law
59 Escritoires
61 Trials and tribulations
62 Formerly present
63 Letters for auditors
64 Vessel with a spigot
65 Freed

Monday's Puzzle Solved



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S	P	E	A	R	S		V	A	N	S		E	N	S
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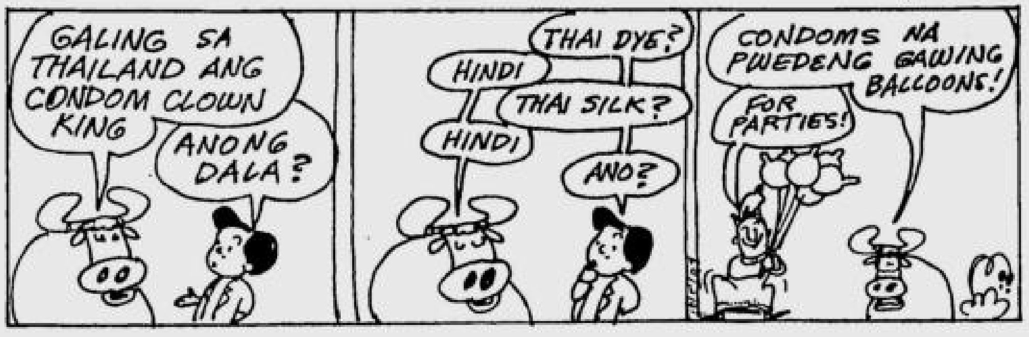
10/5/04

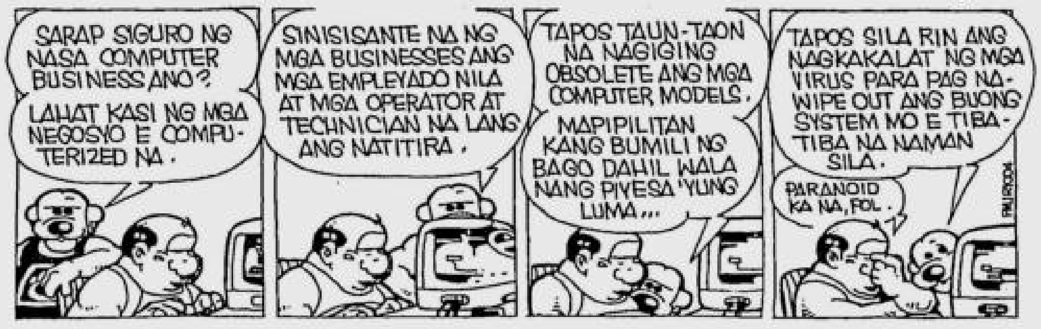
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


GALING SA THAILAND ANG CONDOM CLOWN KING
ANONG DALA?
THAI DYE?
HINDI
THAI SILK?
HINDI
ANO?
CONDOMS NA PWEDENG GAWING BALLOONS!
FOR PARTIES!

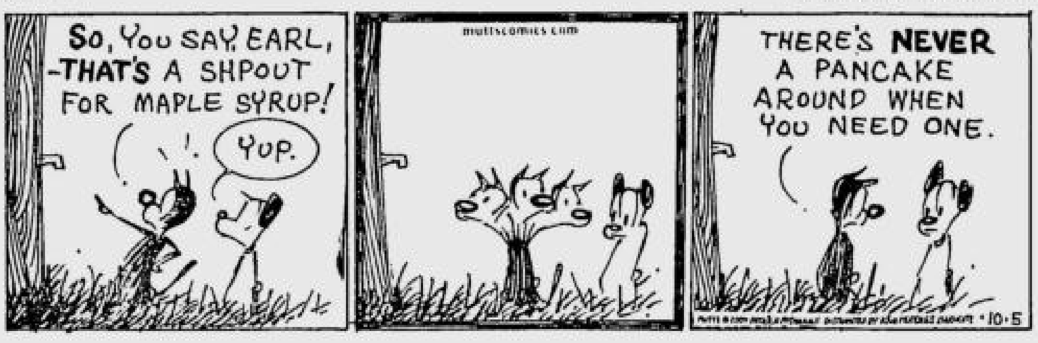
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


SARAP SIGURO NG NASA COMPUTER BUSINESS ANO?
LAHAT KASI NG MGA NEGOSYO E COMPUTERIZED NA.
SINISISANTE NA NG MGA BUSINESSES ANG MGA EMPLEYADO NILA AT MGA OPERATOR AT TECHNICIAN NA LANG ANG NATITIRA.
TAPOS TAUN-TAON NA NAGIGING OBSOLETE ANG MGA COMPUTER MODELS.
MAPIPILITAN KANG BUMILI NG BAGO DAHIL WALA NANG PIYESA 'YUNG LUMA...
TAPOS SILA RIN ANG NAGKAKALAT NG MGA VIRUS PARA PAG NA-WIPE OUT ANG BUONG SYSTEM MO E TIBA-TIBA NA NAMAN SILA.
PARANOID KA NA, POL.
PMJUNIOR

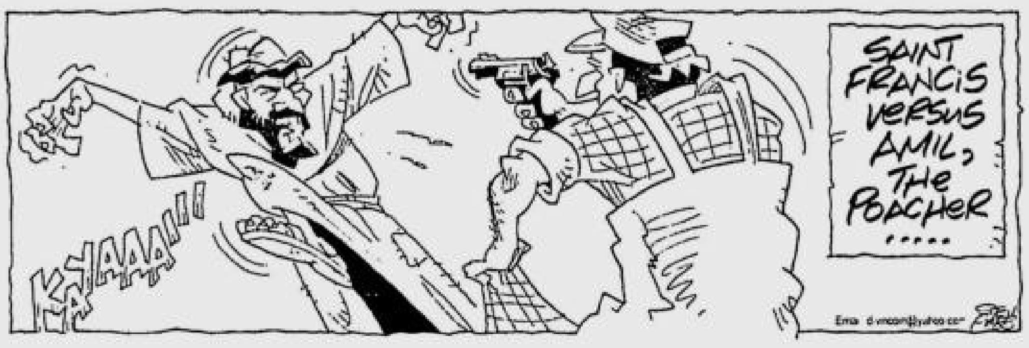
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


So, You SAY, EARL, -THAT'S A SHPOUT FOR MAPLE SYRUP!
YUP.
muttscomics.com
THERE'S NEVER A PANCAKE AROUND WHEN YOU NEED ONE.
10-5

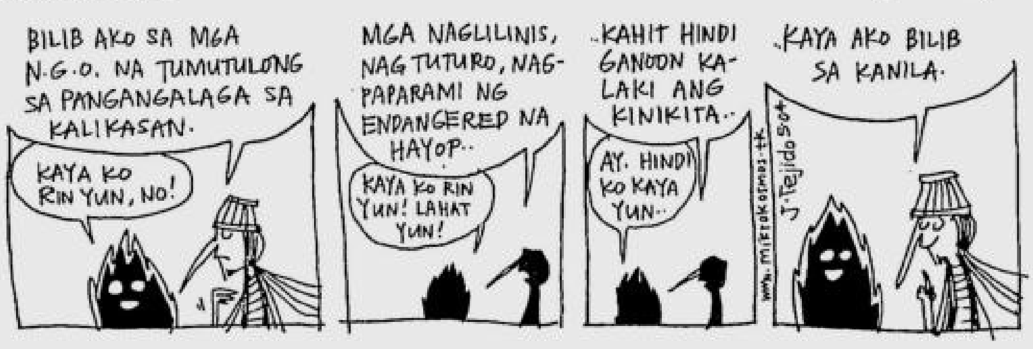
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


KAYAAA!!!
SAINT FRANCIS VERSUS AMIL, THE POACHER .....

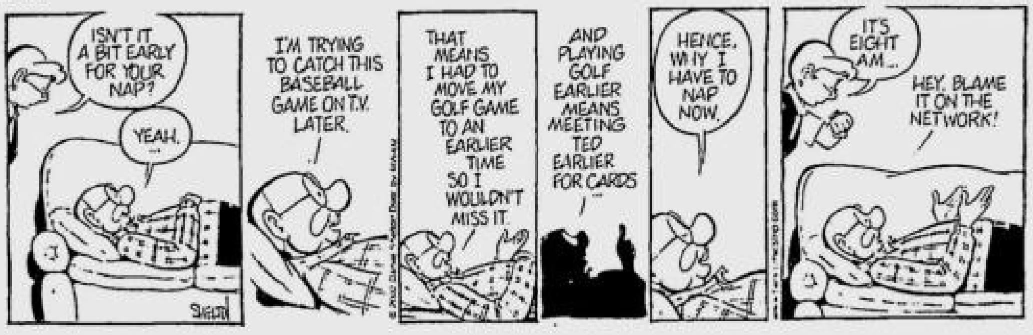
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


BILIB AKO SA MGA N.G.O. NA TUMUTULONG SA PANGANGALAGA SA KALIKASAN.
KAYA KO RIN YUN, NO!
MGA NAGLILINIS, NAGTUTURO, NAGPAPARAMI NG ENDANGERED NA HAYOP..
KAYA KO RIN YUN! LAHAT YUN!
..KAHIT HINDI GANOON KALAKI ANG KINIKITA..
AY. HINDI KO KAYA YUN..
www.mikrokosmos.tk
J. Tejido 504
..KAYA AKO BILIB SA KANILA.

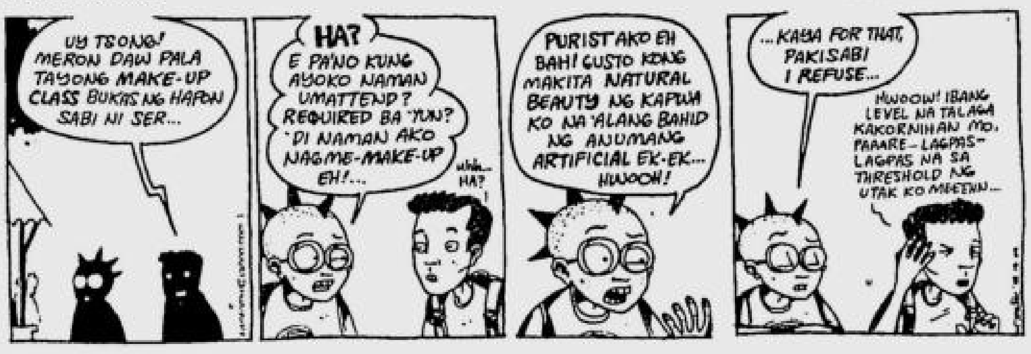
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


ISN'T IT A BIT EARLY FOR YOUR NAP?
YEAH.
SHELTON
I'M TRYING TO CATCH THIS BASEBALL GAME ON T.V. LATER.
THAT MEANS I HAD TO MOVE MY GOLF GAME TO AN EARLIER TIME SO I WOULDN'T MISS IT.
AND PLAYING GOLF EARLIER MEANS MEETING TED EARLIER FOR CARDS
HENCE, WHY I HAVE TO NAP NOW.
IT'S EIGHT AM...
HEY, BLAME IT ON THE NETWORK!

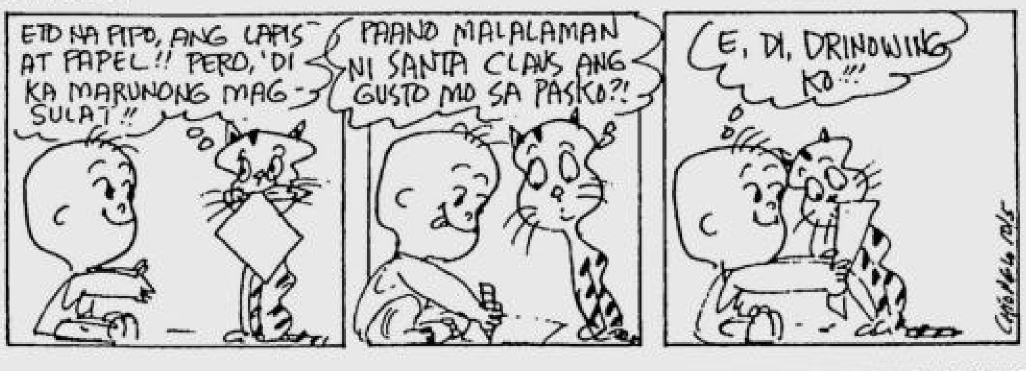
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


UY TSONG! MERON DAW PALA TAYONG MAKE-UP CLASS BUKAS NG HAPON SABI NI SER...
HA? E PA'NO KUNG AYOKO NAMAN UMATTEND? REQUIRED BA 'YUN? 'DI NAMAN AKO NAGME-MAKE-UP EH!...
uhh... HA?
PURIST AKO EH BAH! GUSTO KONG MAKITA NATURAL BEAUTY NG KAPWA KO NA 'ALANG BAHID NG ANUMANG ARTIFICIAL EK-EK... HWOOH!
...KAYA FOR THAT, PAKISABI I REFUSE...
HWOOW! IBANG LEVEL NA TALAGA KAKORNIHAN MO. PAARE - LAGPAS-LAGPAS NA SA THRESHOLD NG UTAK KO MEETHN...

LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ETO NA PIPO, ANG LAPIS AT PAPEL!! PERO, 'DI KA MARUNONG MAG-SULAT!!
PAANO MALALAMAN NI SANTA CLAUS ANG GUSTO MO SA PASKO?!
E, DI, DRINOWING KO!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

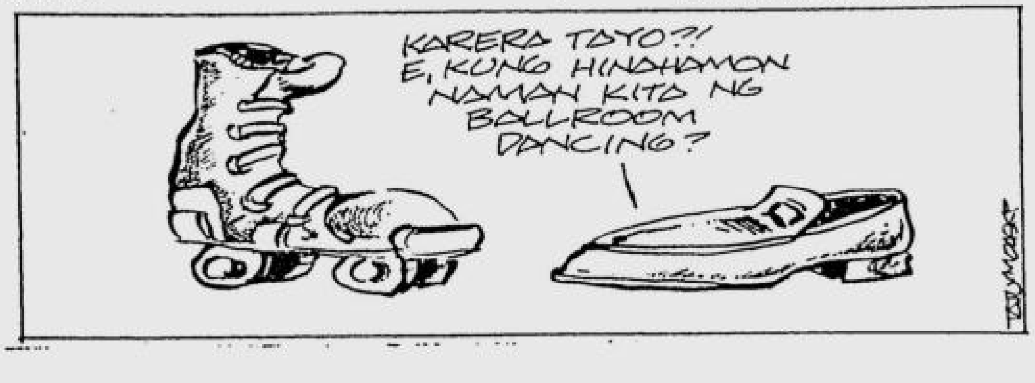

KARERA TAYO?! E, KUNG HINAHAMON NAMAN KITA NG BALLROOM DANCING?

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

Prescription for everyday wellness

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

Here is a must-do day-to-day lifestyle guide to help make you healthier and happier. If you follow this list, wellness (and all its aspects—diet, exercise, relaxation) will no longer be a chore but a pleasure.

Here is my wellness Rx.

Things to remember

- Before you begin, program your mind. Wellness is not an inactive word—it is a lifestyle. It is not something you look at from the outside, but emanates from the inside. You cannot be well if you do not have the desire and discipline to be well.
- Love is the energy and force that a wellness enthusiast taps. It begins with loving yourself—body, mind and spirit—though not egocentric in any way. Its philosophy is based on one truth: "In order to have an endless supply to give others, love must have an endless source and it begins with the self."

Daily

Bring out your instinct for survival. Know that every thought in your mind, every morsel of food you eat, every action you take has an effect (positive or negative) on the physical and non-physical in you.

- Adopt this ritual: When you rise each morning, upon opening your eyes, imagine a radiant white light covering you as you declare: "It's a great/wondrous, miraculous day!"
- Smile at yourself in the mirror.
- Take one glass of warm water mixed with 1 tbsp of apple cider vinegar or fresh lemon juice on an empty stomach.
- Shower, cleanse, moisturize. Use a light exfoliant daily on your face.
- Wear sunblock (SPF 30).
- Breakfast on fresh fruits or unsweetened fruit juice (preferably fresh). Spend 10-15 minutes on prayer/meditation.
- Have a bowl of hot, old-fashioned (big-grained) oatmeal or high fiber cereal mixed with non-fat, calcium-fortified milk like Nestlé Calcium Plus. Add honey, almond, walnuts, if you wish.
- Snack on a fruit/power bar/granola bar or a slice of high fiber bread with tuna and light mayonnaise topping.
- Drink a glass of clean water every waking hour (minimum of 8 glasses).
- Take a full glass of water 15 minutes before a meal. (If you are on a weight loss program, take 1 tbsp of C-Lium fiber, available in Mercury Drug, mixed with water so you will eat less.)
- Have a big bowl of fresh salad greens with tomatoes (the greener the vegetables, the richer in nutrients). Remember the rule of five: Eat five servings of any fruit/veggie combination a day (juices counted).
- Don't eat bread before a meal. It will only fill you with carbohydrates. If you can't help eating bread, have just one slice/bun with no butter.
- Avoid nibbling on chips and nuts before a meal.
- Main courses should be grilled/baked/steamed/poached, not fried if possible. Eat more fish than meat.
- Stop eating when you feel your belly pushing against your skirt/pants, waistline or belt. Don't even wait to burp.
- Limit all carbonated beverages to once a day.
- Dessert should be shared. Never try to finish a whole serving of sweets. You don't need the empty calories.
- If you must have wine, make it red and not more than 1-2 glasses daily. (Remember, alcohol is sugar, so go easy on it.)
- Lightly salt your meal if you have the habit of reaching out for the salt and pepper shakers.
- Do not ask for an extra serving of grated cheese/gravies/sauces with your meal. You don't need the extra oil. (Note: Oil is still fat.)
- Take a cup of hot, fresh, unsweetened ginger tea after meals (it helps digestion and speeds up metabolism).
- Have early morning or late afternoon brisk walks, or light workout in the gym.
- Late night snacking is okay if you have fresh fruit instead of a chocolate bar.
- Take a multivitamin/mineral supplement (like Pharmaton) daily during your heaviest meal (for most people, it's lunch). Have more Vitamin C (1,000 mg) and B (50 mg) if you are highly stressed. If you are a woman, take calcium supplements.
- Wear a smile on your face. A sad face does not attract love, abundance and prosperity. Worse, a gloomy disposition will guarantee more gloom in your life.
- If between meals you have hunger pangs, eat a banana or any fruit.

Weekly

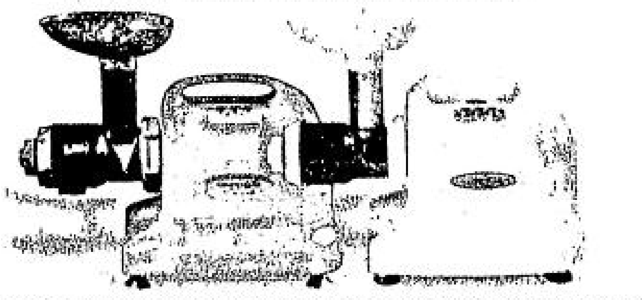
- Hit the gym at least three times a week. Take a combination of classes—cardiovascular, strength-training, stretching, flexibility (like cardio-dance/belly-dancing), weight lifting/resistance training, yoga…
- Have a relaxing massage.
- Have a sugar and oil facial scrub.
- Do a body scrub. Plain rock salt and oil can easily be done at home, or you can go to a spa.

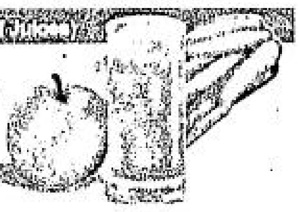
Monthly

- Fast once a month, if you are used to this (have only 10 glasses of coconut water and water and a light carrot/apple juice for 24 hours). If you are a beginner, once every six months. Once you see the benefits, you will practice it more frequently.
- Assess your wellness progress every 30 days. Review the little triumphs you made and pat yourself on the back.
- Praise and reward yourself with simple pleasures (watching a concert/movie, a day at the salon, girl's lunch out).
- Visit and patronize your favorite charity. Make civic-spiritedness a part of your self-expression and not just at Christmas. Helping others is healing.

Love and light!

> You cannot have good health if you do not have the desire and discipline to be healthy





JUICE for the HEALTH of it!

MATSTONE
Multi-Purpose Juice Extractor

CARROT JUICE (The King of Juices)

You'll need:
- ½ kilo small or medium-sized carrots
- 1 large fuji apple for sweetening

Wash carrots & apples and juice! Do not use the tops, as they contain toxic substances.

Traditionally used for:
Acne, Asthma, Arthritis, Bladder problems, Cancer, Cataract, Eye problems, Hay Fever, Liver problems, Skin problems, Ulcers, Weight Loss
A good source of:
Calcium, Phosphorous, Potassium, Sodium, Vitamin B, Vitamin C, Vitamin D, Vitamin E, Vitamin K
(Source: juicing.com)

IMPORTANT: To get the maximum benefit of juicing, always use a juice extractor with a very low RPM, so as not to kill natural vitamins and minerals of fruits & vegetables!

MATSTONE Multi-purpose Juice Extractor is available at:

True Value Home Center
Makati, (02) 867-1268

OTHER DEALERS: METRO MANILA : • IN-A-JIFFY ENT., Manila, 405-0178 • G2K CORP., San Juan, 722-5527 • FAMILY OPTIONS, QC, (02) 721-1789 • VEGEMIX, Kamias, (02) 435-3465 • GREEN DAISY ORGANIC STORE, UP Village, (02) 922-2409 • NATURE'S PATH, Loyola Hts., (02) 928-8889 *PROVINCIAL* • BLUELITE Corp., Laguna, (049) 838-0960 • TIONGSAN HARRISON DEPT. STORE -Baguio- (074) 443-9384 • REVERB, Cebu City, (032) 253-9701 • ECHO APPLIANCE, Cebu City, (032) 253-1858 • LOPUE'S DEPT. STORE, Cebu City, (032) 441-0411 • POS Marketing, Bacolod, (034) 434-1792

Advt.

For inquiries & free product demo, please call 373-7398 to 97 & [illegible]

Time to set the record straight on pill use & weight gain

Women using Desogestrel-containing low dosed 20 mcg EE pills:

NO WEIGHT GAIN!

Today's low dose pills do not cause weight gain. But the association between weight gain and the Pill is one of women's most deeply held views, and that coupled with the importance of body image means that it is very hard to change. However, it means many women are limiting their contraceptive options and missing out on the benefits of the Pill.

The Pill has very much changed since it was first introduced 40 years ago. **Early high- dose pills contained more than 80 mcg of estrogen (in the form of Ethinylestradiol) and almost certainly caused weight gain in some women. However, the pills in common use today almost universally contain much less amount of estrogen. These low dose pills, in particular, those with only 20mcg of estrogen are not associated with weight gain.**

Studies with a low dose combined pill containing just 20 mcg of Ethinylestradiol (EE) + 150mcg of desogestrel (DSG) showed that the weight of the majority of women who used this pill for 6-13 cycles had stable body weight (Serfaty, et al. 1998 and Lavin, et al. 2004)

It is really time to set the record straight in relation to the Pill and weight gain. **The evidence shows that fear of weight gain is unfounded and should not deter women from using the Pill.** Women need to be given the facts to remove this common and persistent misconception. Occasionally, hormonal contraceptives could cause modest but transient increases in weight as women's bodies become accustomed to the hormonal changes. For this reason, women should continue with a method for at least three months to give your body time to adapt to the Pill or any hormonal contraceptive before stopping. **It is indeed time for women to be aware that weight gain is usually associated with behavioral and physical changes attributable to aging!**

For questions, please consult your doctor or email:
Or text to 0917-8523350
Or send your letters to:
ORGANON PHILS., INC.
5th Flr., Felisa Bdg., #108
VA Rufino St., Legaspi
Village, Makati City 1260
Tel. # 02- 8177638 loc. 14 & 20
Fax # 02- 8177471

GUYITO WILD HUNT

REWARDS

The wild chase is on for Inquirer's Guyito!

Look for the specially-marked Guyito coupon in the pages of Inquirer. Cut out, put your name, address and signature. Drop at designated drop boxes for a shot at your most wanted rewards!

Join the fun as Inquirer celebrates 19 exciting years of giving Filipinos no less than balanced news and fearless views.

Hunt from September 27 to December 14, 2004!

See posters and print ads for more details.

MOBILE 1 iPod palmOne digital exchange PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

All products are available at Digital Exchange Glorietta 3

Ang inyong tagapaghatid
ng ulat-pangmulat, 10:30pm na!
Simula ngayong Huwebes
Kasama ang inyong kabalitaan,
Cheri Mercado

Dito lang sa ABC

INQ TV

Shoe pieces

RED hot sneakers for trendsetters

LA GEAR unveils its latest shoe collection for the fa-shoe-nably trendy.

Whether you're *kikay*, sporty or funky, LA Gear has the right pair to match your outfit.

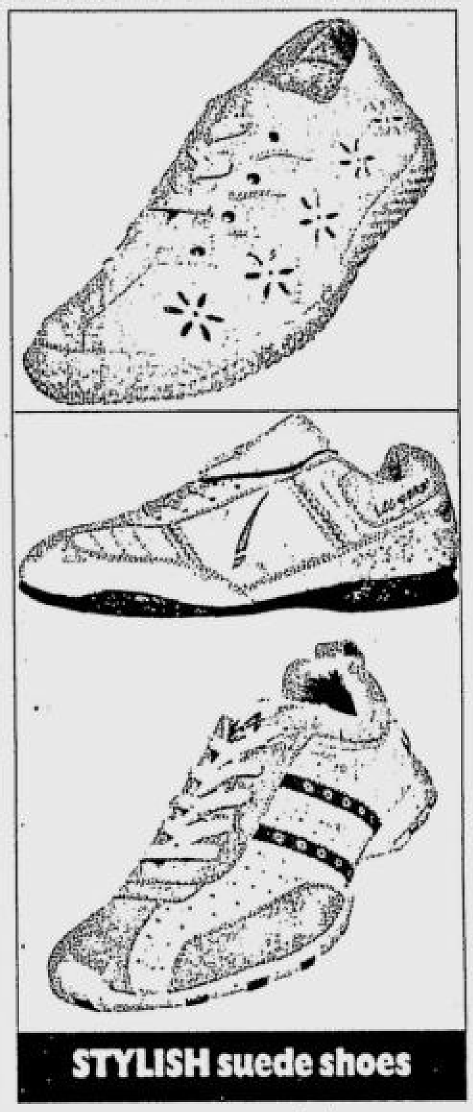
Choose from over 20 colorful shoes and sneaker with trendy designs.

Check out the LA Gear boutiques at Glorietta 4, Robinsons Place Manila, SM North Edsa, SM Southmall and Ayala Center Cebu. A new branch will soon open at Market! Market! in Global City and Gateway Mall in Araneta Center.

LA Gear is also available in leading department stores like SM, Robinsons, Rustan's, The Landmark and Sta. Lucia East, as well as specialty stores Sports Central, Cinderella, Toby's, Royal Sporting House, Planet Sports, Athlete's Foot and Olympic Village.

PRETTY powder blue shoes for dainty feet

COLORFUL LA Gear sneakers can jazz up any outfit.



STYLISH suede shoes

Pinoys are ice skating champs

THE SM Philippine Ice Skating Team won the championship at the recent Ice Skating Institute of America (ISIA) World Team Championship in Blaine, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The Filipinos, who competed against teams from the United States, the United Arab Emirates, Thailand and Mexico, received a total of 776.5 points.

Runners-up were the White Bear Lake Sports team and Plymouth Ice Center.

The Philippine team consisted of Christian Gabriel Cruz, 25, who has won 144 gold, 58 silver and 12 bronze medals from local and international competitions. He was the most bemedalled team member in Minneapolis, with nine gold and five silver medals in 14 events.

Roxanne Puno, 14, a student at the Poveda Learning Center, was invited to perform in a benefit show with Olympic ice skater Jenny Kirk. She won four gold and one silver medal.

Katrice Regina de los Reyes, 11 and also a Poveda student, won four gold and two silver medals in the Minnesota.

Bien Patrick Bergonia, 11, brought home two gold and silver silver medals. He won a gold medal in San Jose, California when he was only 4.

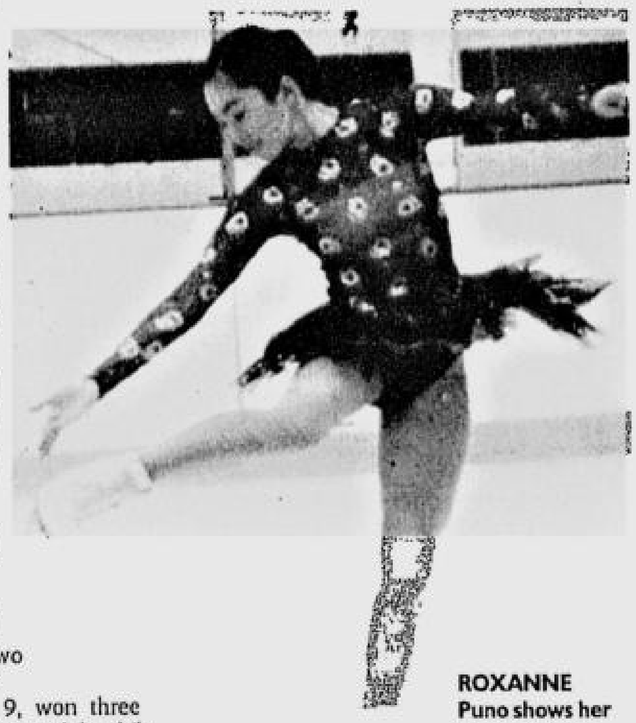
Dale Marcus Feliciano won seven gold medals in Minnesota.

Four-year-old Kate Jaclyn Guevarra, the youngest in the Philippine team, won two gold and two bronze medals.

Carmen Naomi Damian, 9, won three gold, five silver and one bronze medals while Francesca Dominique Rescasata, 11, brought home four gold and two bronze medals.

Most team members learned ice skating at the SM Megamall and SM Southmall Ice Skating Rinks.

FRANCESCA Dominique Rescasata brought home four gold and two bronze medals.



ROXANNE Puno shows her fire on the ice.

No

sweet

talk.

The drinks pictured above are for the health-conscious.

Low calorie, and like this ad, completely sugar free.

"Coca-Cola light", "Royal", "Sprite", and the Dynamic Ribbon device are trademarks of The Coca-Cola Company © 2004 The Coca-Cola Company

SO WHAT COKE ARE YOU, REALLY?

Did you know that it's easy to tell someone's character by the things he or she likes? Take the quiz below and be surprised how much your taste tells a lot about who you are and, most of all, what Coke will best refresh you.

What would you wear on a big date?
A. A classy, all-black ensemble from top to toe
B. Whatever's loose and comfortable
C. Preppy silhouette that's dominantly neutrals
D. Body-hugging that will show your assets

Who are the artists on your CD rack?
A. Maroon 5, Alicia Keys
B. Hoobastank, Incubus
C. Dashboard Confessional
D. Ministry of Sound, Ibiza

What do you read?
A. Newspaper and novels
B. Independent titles
C. Comics and sci-fi
D. Magazines and self-help books

How do you like your steak?
A. Well-done
B. Rare
C. Medium-rare
D. I don't eat steak

What is your dream cell phone?
A. The less complicated, the better
B. Something that no one else has
C. With lots of games and software to operate
D. Streamlined, with lots of stylish covers

What's you dream car?
A. Anything that has four wheels and drive
B. SUV
C. Beetle
D. Porsche

How will you pose in your yearbook photo?
A. Something that mommy would hang on the wall
B. Wacky and crazy, with tongue sticking out
C. You really don't care
D. Glamorous, almost like a magazine photo shoot

Now, the fun part. Below is an assessment of your personality profile. Find out which one you are based on your answers above. As a bonus, we've also written down which Coca-Cola best describes and suits you. After all, there's nothing like grabbing a Coke that'll refresh you the way you want it to.

Mostly A's
You're a classic. Everyone finds it easy to talk to you, and you get along well with almost everybody. You find it easy to get new friends, even in the most unlikely places.

So to speak, you're like the Regular Coke. The one that everyone has always loved.

Mostly B's
You're on the wild side. You like to explore new places, and you love the outdoors. You find satisfaction in experimenting, and is happy knowing that there's always something different to do.

If you were a Coke, you'd be Cherry Coke. There's always a cherry wild side in you!

Mostly C's
You've got a lot going for you coz you've got it just right. You always see the fun side of things. Easy-going and humorous, surely no party will be the same without you.

You're definitely a Vanilla Coke–you have just the right touch of vanilla.

Mostly D's
You're ultra sophisticated. You always strive to improve yourself. You go to the gym, eat healthy food, because you know they're good for you. You're a New Age phenomenon!

Coke Light best suits you. It's the same Coke but with less than 1 calorie, it's good for you.